

THE
SOULES

CONFLICT
with it selfe,
AND VICTORY
over it selfe by Faith.

A Treatise of the inward disquiet-
ments of distressed spirits, with
comfortable remedies to establish
them.

*Returne unto thy rest O my soule, for the
Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*

By R. Sibbs D. D. Master of
Katharine Hall in Cambridge and
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The fourth Edition.

L O N D O N,
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at the Brazen Serpent in Pauls
Church-yard. 1638.

TO
**THE RIGHT
VVORSHIPFULL,**

Sir JOHN BANKS Knight, the Kings
Majesties Attourney Generall,

Sir EDVVARD MOSELY Knight,
His Majesties Attourney of the Du-
chie,

Sir WILLIAM DENNY Knight, one
of the Kings learned Counsell,

Sir DUDLY DIGGES Knight, one of
the Masters of the Chāuncery,

And the rest of the Worshipfull Readers
and Benchers, with the Auncients, Bar-
resters, Students, and all others belong-
ing to the Honourable Society of
Graves-Inne :

R. SIBBS Dedicateth these Sermons Prea-
ched amongst them, in testimony of his due
Observance, and desire of their spirituall
and eternall good.

To the Christian READER,



Here be two sorts of people
alwaies in the visible Chorch:
One that Satan keeps under
with false peace, whose life is
nothing but a diversion to
present contentments, and
running away from God and their owne
hearts, which they know can speak no good
unto them; these speak peace to themselves,
but God speaks none. Such have nothing to
do with this *Scripture*; the way for these men
to enjoy comfort, is to be soundly troubled.
True peace arises from knowing the worst
first, and then our freedome from it. It is a mi-
serable peace that riseth from ignorance of e-
vill. The Angell *troubled the waters*, and then
cured those that slept in. It is Christs manner
to trouble our soules first, and then to come
with healing in his wings.

But there is another sort of people, who be-
ing drawn out of *Satans* kingdome, & within
the Covenant of grace, whom *Satan* labours
to unsettle and disquiet: being the *god of the*
world, he is vexed to see men in the world,
walk *above* the world. Since he cannot hinder
their estate, he will trouble their peace, and
damp their spirits, and cut asunder the sinews
of all their endeavors. These should take them-
selves to taske as *David* doth here, and la-
bour

Mark it.
John 5:

TO THE CHRISTIAN

Accequal.

Mark it

bour to maintain their portion, and the glory of a Christian profession. For whatsoever is in God or comes from God, is for their comfort. *Himselfe* is the God of comfort; his *Spiris* most knowne by that office. Our blessed Saviour was so carefull that his *Disciples* should not be too much dejected, that he forgot his owne bitter passion to comfort them, whom yet he knew would all forsake him: *Let not your hearts be troubled*, saith he. And his own soule was troubled to death, that we should not be troubled: *whatsoever is written is written for this end*; every article of faith hath a speciall influence in comforting a beleev-
ing soul. They are not only food, but cordials; Yea he put himselfe to his *Oath*, that we might not onely have *Consolation*, but strong *Consolation*. The Sacraments seale unto us all the comforts we have by the death of Christ; the excercise of *Religion*, as *Prayer*, *Hearing*, *Reading*, &c. is that *our joy may be full*: the *Communion of Saints* is chiefly ordained to comfort the feeble minded, and to strengthen the weak. Gods government of his Church tends to this. Why doth he sweeten our pilgrimage, and let us see so many comfortable daies in the world, but that we should serve him with cheerfull and good hearts? As for crosses, he doth but cast us down, to raise us up, & empty us that he may fill us, and melt us that we may be *vessels of glory*, loving us as well in the furnace, as when we are out, and standing by us all the while. *We are troubled but not distressed*.

sed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken. If we consider from what fatherly love afflictions come, how they are not only moderated, but sweetened and sanctified in the issue to us, how can it but minister matter of comfort in the greatest seeming discomforts? How then can we let the reins of our affections loose to sorrow without being injurious to God and his providence? as if we would teach him how to govern his Church?

What unthankfulness is it to forget our consolation, and to looke only upon matter of grievance? to think so much upō two or three crosses, as to forget an hundred blessings? To suck poyson out of that, frō which we should suck hony? what folly is it to straiten & darken our own spirits? and indispose our selves for doing or taking good? A limb out of joynt can do nothing without deformity & paine; dejection takes off the wheelles of the soule.

Of all other, Satan hath most advantage of discontented persons, as most agreeable to his disposition, being the most discontented creature under heaven; He hammers all his darke plots in their brains. The (discontentment) of the *Israelites in the wilderness*, provoked God to swear, that they should never enter into his rest. There is another spirit in my servant Caleb, saith God; the spirit of Gods people is an encouraging spirit. Wisdome teaches them if they feel any grievances, to conceal them from others that are weaker, lest they be disheart-

2 COL. 4. 8.

Mark it

It should be
the (discontentment)
Hab. 3. 19
Psa. 95. ult.

Deu. 28. 65

ned, God threatens it as a *curse* to give a *trembling heart*, and *frown of mind*; whereas on the contrary, joy is as *oyle* to the *soule*, it makes *duties* come off cheerfully and sweetly from our selves, graciously to others, and acceptably to God. A *Prince* cannot endure it in his subjects, nor a *Father* in his children to be lowring at their presence. Such usually have *stolen waters* to delight themselves in.

How many are there that upon the disgrace that follows Religion, are frighted from it? But what are discouragements, to the encouragements Religion brings with it? which are such as the very *Angels* themselves admire at. Religion indeed brings *crosses* with it, but the it brings comforts *above* those crosses. What a dishonour is it to Religion to conceive that God will not maintain and honour his followers? as if his service were not the best service; what a shame is it for an heir of heaven to be cast down for every petty losse and crosse? To be afraid of a man whose breath is in his nostrils, in not standing to a good cause, when we are sure God will stand by us, assisting and comforting us, whose presence is able to make the greatest torments sweet?

My discourse tends not to take men off from all griefe and mourning; *Light for the righteous is found in sorrow*. Our state of absence from the Lord, and living here in a vaile of teares, our daily infirmities, and our sympathy with others, requires it; and where most grace is, there

*Tua praesentia Domine,
Laurentio
ipsam cruciatulum dulce
fecit.*

there is most sensiblenesse, as in Christ. But we must distinguish between griefe, and that sullenesse and dejection of spirit, which is with a repining and taking off from duty; when *Ioshua* was overmuch cast down at Israels turning their backs before their enemies, God reproves him, *Get thee up Ioshua, why liest thou upon thy face?*

Iosh. 7. 10.

(Some would have men after the committing of grosse sins to be presently comfortable, and beleve without humbling themselves at all; indeed when we are once in Christ, we ought not to question our state in him; and if we doe, it comes not from the Spirit: But yet a guilty conscience will be clamorous and full of objections, & God will not speak peace unto it till it be humbled.) God will let his best children know what it is to be too bold with sin, as we see in *David* and *Peter*, (who felt no peace till they had renewed their repentance) The way to rejoyce with joy unspeakable and glorious, is to stir up sighs that cannot be uttered. And it is so farre, that the knowledge of our state in grace should not humble us, that very ingenuity considering Gods love to us, out of the nature of the thing it selfe works sorrow and shame in us to offend his Majesty.

One main stop that hinders Christians from rejoycing, is, that they give themselves too much liberty to question their grounds of comfort & interest in the promises. This is wonderfull comfortable say they, but what is it to me? the

(A great Error (this) for before the open repent of our sins we sin against a kind Father we must by faith be assured of the loving goodness of God and gracious goodnature of him who has promised to pardon us freely according to his grace and not according to our deservings (the Error)

TO THE CHRISTIAN

2 Pet. 10.

mise belongs not to *me*. This ariseth frō want of giving all *diligence to make their calling sure* to themselves. In watchfulnesse and diligence we sooner meet with comfort than in idle complaining. Our care therefore should be to get found *evidence* of a good estate, & then likewise to keep our *evidence cleare*; wherein we are not to hearken to our own fears & doubts, or the suggestion of our enemy, who studies to falsifie our *evidence*: but to the *Word*, & our own consciences inlightned by the spirit: and then it is pride and pettishnesse to stand out against comfort to the selves. Christians should study to corroborate their title; we are never more in heaven, before we come thither, then when we can reade our evidences: It makes us converse much with God, it sweetens all conditions, & makes us willing to do & suffer any thing. It makes us have comfortable & honorable thoughts of our selves, as too good for the service of any base lust, and brings confidence in God both in life and death.

1. But what if our condition be so dark, that we cannot reade our evidence at all?

Here looke up to Gods infinite mercy in Christ, as we did at the first when we found no goodnesse in our selves, & that is the way to recover what ever we think we have lost. By honouring Gods mercy in Christ, we come to have the Spirit of Christ; therefore when the waters of sanctification are troubled and muddy, let us run to the witnes of *blood*, God seems

seems to walk sometimes contrary to himself; he seems to discourage, when secretly he doth incourage, as the *woman of Canaan*; but faith can find out these waies of God, & untie these knots by looking to the free promise & mercifull nature of God. Let our fottish and rebellious flesh murre as much as it will, *who art thou? and what is thy worth?* Yet a Christian knows whom he beleeveth. Faith hath learned to set God against all.

Again, we must go on to *add grace to grace*. A growing & fruitfull Christian, is alwaies a comfortable Christian; the oyle of *grace* brings forth the oyle of *gladness* (Christ is first a King of *righteousnes*, & thē a King of *peace*; the righteousness that he works by his Spirit brings a peace of *sanctification*, whereby though we are not freed from sin, yet we are enabled to combat with it, & to get the victory over it) Some degree of comfort follows every good actiō, as heat accompanies fire, and as beams and influences issue from the *Sun*; which is so true, that very *Heathens* upō the discharge of a good conscience, have found cōfort & peace answerable; this is a reward before our reward.

(Another thing that hinders the comfort of Christians is, that they forget what a gracious & mercifull covenant they live under, wherein, the perfectiō that is required is to be found in Christ. Perfection in us is sincerity; what is the end of *faith* but to bring us to Christ? Now imperfect faith, if sincere, knits to Christ, in whom our perfection lies.)

Gods

Heb. 7. 2.

(A most excellent Truth God give us the experience of it) —.

Premium ante pyrami

(There is rather too much given to the sincerity of our Faith, for it is the spirit that unites us to Christ)

TO THE CHRISTIAN

Gods design in the covenant of grace is to exalt the riches of his mercy above all sin and unworthines of man; and we yeeld him more glory of his mercy by beleieving, than it would be to his justice to destroy us. If we were perfect in our selves, we should not honour him so much, as when wee labour to be found in Christ, having his righteousnesse upon us.

There is no one portiō of Scripture oftner used to fetch up drooping spirits than this, *Why art thou cast down, o my soul?* it is figurative, & full of Rhetorique, and all little enough to perswade the perplexed soule quietly to *trust in God*; which without this retiring into our selves, and checking our hearts, will never be brought to passe. *Chrysostome* brings in a man loaden with troubles, cōming into the Church, where whē he heard this passage read, he presently recovered himself, & becomes another man. As *David* therefore did acquaint himself with this form of dealing with his soule, so let us, demanding a reason of our selves, *Why wee are cast down*; which will at least check & put a stop to the distresse, and make us fit to consider more solid grounds of true comfort.

(Of necessity the soul must be something calmed & staid before it can be cōforted. Whilst the humors of the body rage in a great distemper, there is no giving of physick: So when the soul gives way to passion, it is unfit to entertain any counsel, therefore it must be stilled by degrees, that it may hear reason; and sometimes

it

*Hamil. in
Gen.*

*(This whole
Paragraph)*

it is fitter to be moved with ordinary reason (as being more familiar unto it) thā with higher reasons fetcht from our supernatural condition in Christ, as from the condition of mans nature subject to changes, from the uncomeliness of yeelding to passion, for that, which it is not in our power to mend, &c. these & such like reasons have some use to stay the fit for a while, but they leave the coare untouched, which is *sunne*, the trouble of all troubles. Yet whē such considerations are made spiritual by *faith* on higher grounds, they have some operation upō the soul, as the influence of the *Moon* having the stronger influence of the *Sun* mingled with it, becoms more effectuell upō these inferiour bodies. A candle light being ready at hand, is sometimes as usefull as the Sun it selfe.)

But our main chē should be to have *Evangelicall* grounds of cōfort, near to us, as *Reconciliation with God*, whereby all things else are reconciled to us, *Adoption & Communion with Christ*, &c. which is never sweeter than under the Crosse. *Philip Lausgrave* of *Hesse*, being a long time prisoner under *Charles the fift*, was demanded what upheld him all that time, who answered that *(he felt the divine comforts of the Martyrs)* there be *divine comforts* which are felt under the Crosse, and not at other times.

Besides personall troubles, there are many much dejected with the present state of the Church, seeing the blood of so many Saints to be shed, & the enemies oft to prevail; but God hath

had been
better left
out than not

(Rather the
Comforts with
the Martyrs
had in Christ)

Respondit,
divinas con-
solationes
Martyrum
se sentisse.

TO THE CHRISTIAN

hath stratagems, as *Ioshua*, at *Ay*; he seemes sometimes to retire that he may come upon his enemies with the greater advantage; the end of all these troubles will no doubt be the ruine of the Antichristian faction; and we shall see the Church in her more perfect beauty; when the enemies shall be in that place which is fittest for the, the *lowest*, that is, the *footstool* of *Christ*; the Church as it is highest in the favour of God, so it shall be highest in it self. *The mountaine of the Lord shall be exalted above all mountains.* In the worst condition, the Church hath two faces, one towards heaven & *Christ*, which is alwaies constant and glorious: another toward the world, which is in appearance contemptible and changeable. But God will in the end give her beauty for ashes, and glory double to her shame: and she shall in the end prevaile: in the meane time, the power of the enemies is in Gods hand: The Church of God conquers when it is conquered: even as our Head *Christ* did, who overcame by patience as well as by power. *Christ*s victory was upon the Crosse. The Spirit of a Christian conquers, when his person is conquered.

The way is, instead of discouragement, to search all the promises made to the Church in these latter times, & to turne them into prayers, & presse God earnestly for the performace of them. Then we shall soone find God both *cursing* his enemies, and *blessing* his people out of *Zion*, by the faithfull prayers that ascend up from thence.

In

*Robur ho-
stium apud
Deum.*

(In all the *promises* we should have special recourse to God in them. In all storms there is Sea-room enough in the infinite goodnesse of God, for faith to be carryed with full saile.)

(And it must be remembered that in all places where God is mentioned, we are to understand God in the promised *Messiah*, typified out so many wayes unto us. And to put the more vigor into such places in the reading of them, we in this latter age of the Church must think of God shining upon *us* in the face of Christ, and *our* Father in him. If they had so much confidence in so little light, it is a shame for us not to be confident in good things where so strong a light shines round about us: when we professe we beleeve a *crowne of righteousness is laid up for all those that love his appearing*. Presenting these things to the soul by faith, setteth the soul in such a pitch of resolution, that no discouragements are able to seize upon it. *We faint not* saith S. Paul: wherefore doth he not faint? because *these light & short afflictions procure an exceeding weight of glory.*)

(*Luther* when he saw *Melancthon* a godly and learned man too much dejected for the state of the Church in those times, falls a chiding of him, as *David* doth here his own soul, *I strongly hate those miserable cares*, saith he, *whereby thou writest thou art even spent*. It is not the greatnesse of the cause, but the greatnesse of our incredulity. If the cause be false, let us revoke it. If true, why doe we make God in his

rich

(*Ed blessed Trust in God*)

(*Mark this Paragraph all through*)

Ego miserrimas curas, quibus te consumi scribis, vehementer odi. Quod sic regnat in corde tuo, non est magnitudo causæ sed magnitudo incredulitatis nostræ. Si causa falsa est, revocemus. Si vera, cur facimus illum tantis promissis mendacem? Lucrare contra teipsum maxime ambossem.

(*Good indeed*)

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

rich promises a liar? Strive against thyself, the
greatest enemy; why doe we feare the conquered
world, that have the Conquerer himselfe on our
side?)

is this advice

2 Cor. 1.
ult.

Now to speak something concerning the publishing of this Treatise. I began to preach on the Text about twelve years since in the City, & afterwards finished the same at *Grays-Inne*. After which, some having gotten imperfect notes, endeavored to publish them without my privity. Therefore to do my self right, I thought fit to reduce them to this forme. There is a pious & studious Gentleman of *Grays-Inne*, that hath of late published observations upon the whole *Psalms*; and another upon this very *verse* very well; and many others by Treatises of *faith* and such like, have furthered the spirituall peace of Christians much. It were to be wished that we would all joyne to doe that which the Apostle gloried in, *to be helpers of the joy of Gods people*. By reason of my absence, while the work was in printing, some sentences were mistaken. Some will be ready to deprave the labours of other men; but, so good may be done, let such ill disposed persons be what they are, and what they will be, unlesse God turn their hearts: and so I commend thee and this poore Treatise to Gods blessing.

GRAYES INNE,

July 1. 1635.

R. SIBBES.

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IN OPVS POSTHVMM
ADMODVM REVERENDI,
mihique multis Nominibus colendi,
RICHARDI SIBBS S. T. Professoris,
Aulæ Sæ Cath. Præfecti dignissimi.

Vade Liber, pie Dux Anima, pie Mentis Achates;
Te relegendus Fructu ne pereunte legat.
Quam felix prodis! Pra sacro Codice sordens,
Bartole, siue tui; siue, Galene, tui.

Fidus Præco DEI, cælestis Cultor Agelli
Assidui Pretium grande Laboris habet:
Quo Mihi nec Vitâ melior, nec promptior Ore,
Gratior aut Vultu, nec fuit Arte prior.

Nil opus ut Nardum Caro combibat unctâ Sabaum,
Aliâve marmoreus Sydera tangat Apex:
Non eget Hic Urnâ, non Marmore; nempè Volumen
Stat sacrum, vivax Marmor, & Urna, P I O.

Qui CHRISTO vivens incessit Tramite Cæli,
Ætherenâq; obiit Munus, obire nequit:
Ducit Hic Angelicis aequalia secula Lustris,
Qui VERBO Studium contulit omne suum.

Perlegat

*Perlegat Hunc Legum Cultrix Veneranda Senectus,
Et quos plena Deo Mens super Astra vehit:
Venduntur (quanti !) circum Palatia Fumi !
Hic sacer ALTARIS CARBO minoris erit ?*

*Heu ! Pietas ubi prisca ? profana ô Tempora ! Mundi
Fax ! Vesper ! prope nox ! ô Mora ! CHRISTE veni.
Si valere Preces unquam, & Custodia CHRISTI.
Nunc opus est Precibus, nunc Ope, CHRISTE, tua.*

*Certat in humanis Vitiarum Infamia rebus,
Hei mihi ! nulla novis sufficit Herba Malis ?
Probra referre pudet ; nec enim decet : Exprobret illa
Qui volet ; Est nostrum flere, silendo queri.*

*Flere ? Tonabo tuas, Pietas neglecta, Querelas !
Quid non Schisma, Tepor, Fallus, & Astus agunt ?
Addo-Sed Historicus TACITUS fuit optimus. Immo
Addam—Sphararum at Musica muta placet*

EDV^o: BENLÖSIQ

Cressinge Templariorum
Prid. Cal. Febr.
M DC XXXV.



On the Worke of my learned Friend,
DOCTOR SIBBES.

Foole that I was ! to thinke my easie Pen
Had strength enough to glorifie the fame
Of this knowne Author, this rare Man of men :
Or give the least advantage to his name. (bright,
Who think, by praise, to make his name more
Shew the Suns Glory, by dull Candle-light.

Blest Saint ! thy hallow'd Pages doe require
No slight preferment from our slender Layes :
We stand amaz'd, at what we most admire ;
Ah, what are Saints the better for our praise !
He that commends this Volume, does no more
Then warme the fire, or gild the massie Ore.

Let me stand silent then. O, may that Spirit,
Which ledd thy hand, direct mine eye, my brest ;
That I may reade, and doe ; and so inherit
(What thou enjoy'st, and taught) eternall Rest !
Foole that I was ! to think my Lines could give
Life to that work, by which they hope to live.

FRA:QUA:



THE
SOULES
CONFLICT
WITH IT SELFE.

PSAL. XLII.

Why art thou cast down O my soule? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.



THE *Psalmes* are, (as it were) the Anatomy of a (holy man) which lay the inside of a truly devout man outward to the view of others. If the Scriptures be compared to a body, the *Psalmes* may well bee the

B. 3

heart,

(This may be so, but generally of a holy and happy heart.)

heart, they are so full of sweet affections, and passions. For in other portions of Scripture God speakes to us ; but in the *Psalmes* holy men speak to God and their owne hearts : as

In this *Psalme*, we have *the passionate passages of a broken and a troubled spirit.*

At this time *David* was a banished man, banished from his owne house, from his friends, and which troubled him most, from the house of God, upon occasion of *Sauls* persecution, who hunted him as a Partridge upon the mountaines. See how this works upon him.

I. *Hee layes open his desire springing from his love.* Love being the prime and leading affection of the soule from whence grieve springs, from being crossed in that we love. For the setting out of which his affection to the full, hee borroweth an expressiō from the Hart, no Hart being chased by the hunters, *panteth more after the waters*, then my heart doth *after thee O God* : though he found God present with him in exile, yet there is a sweeter presence of him in his ordinances, which now he wanted

Verse 1.

ted and tooke to heart: places and conditions are happy or miserable, as God vouchsafeth his gracious presence more or lesse; and therefore, *When, O when shall it be, that I appeare before God?*

2. Then after his strong desire, hee laies out his griefe, which hee could not containe, but must needs give a vent to it in teares: and he had such a spring of griefe in him, as fedde his teares day and night; all the ease he found was to dissolve this cloud of grief into the showre of teares.

But, *why gives he this way to his griefe?*

Because together with his exiling from Gods house, he was upbrayded by his enemies, with his religion: *where is now thy God?* Grievances come not alone, but (as *Iobs* messengers) follow one another. These bitter taunts, together with the remembrance of his former happinesse in communion with God in his house, made deep impressions in his soule, when hee *remembered how he went with the multitude into the house of God,* and led a goodly traine with him, being willing as a good Magistrate, and

2.

Vase 1.

Quest.

Ans.

Vase 3.

Vase 4.

Master of a family, not to goe to the house of God alone, nor to heaue alone, but to carry as many as hee could with him; Oh! the remembrance of this made him powre forth (not his words or his teares onely, but) his very soule. *Former fauours and happinesse makes the soule more sensible of all impressions to the contrary;* hereupon finding his soule over sensible, he expostulates with himselfe, *Why art thou cast downe O my soule? and why art thou disquieted within mee? &c.*

Verse 7.

But though the remembrance of the former sweetnesse of Gods presence did somewhat stay him, yet his grief would not so bee stilled, and therefore it gathers upon him againe; *one grieffe called upon another,* as one deep wave follows another without intermission, untill his soule was almost over-whelmed under these waters; yet he recovers himselfe a little with looking up to God, who he expected would with speed and authority send forth *his loving kindnesse* with command to raise him up and comfort him, and give him matter of *songs in the*

the night. For all this, his unruly griefe will not bee calmed, but renues assaults upon the returne of the reproach of his enemies. Their words were *as swords* unto him, and his heart being made very tender and sensible of griefe, these sharp words enter too deep; and thereupon he hath recourse to his former remedy (as being the most tried) to chide his soule (and charge it to trust in God.)

Cap. 1.
Verse 8.

Verse 10.

*No Man
can do this
but by the
Blaspheming*

CAP. I.

Generall Observations upon the Text.

HENCE in generall wee may observe; that *(Griefe gathered to a head will not be quieted at the first)* We see here passions intermingled with comforts, and comforts with passions, and what bustling there is, before David can get the victory over his owne heart: You have some short spirited Christians, that if they be not comforted at the first, they think all labour with their hearts is in vaine, and thereupon give way to their griefe. (But we see in David,

Obser. I

*(It will
not be so
but when
the Spirit
speaks it is
no more).*

Cap. 1.

*This he did
but it was
by faith*

*It is a whole
but then
it is not
the in faith
or it is no
good to us
at all*

Obser. 2

Reason,

*Acutus ur-
get que
necessitatis
sunt, quam
que spe-
tant ad vo-
luptatem.*

vid, as distemper ariseth upon distem-
per, so he gives check upon ckeck, and
charge upon charge to his soule, un-
till at length hee brought it to a quiet
temper.) In Physick if one purge will
not carry away the vicious humour,
then we adde a second; if that will not
doe it, we take a third. (So should wee
deale with our soules; perhaps, one
check, one charge will not doe it, then
fall upon the soule againe; send it to
God againe, and never give over untill
our soules bee possessed of our soules
againe.)

Againe, In generall observe in Da-
vids spirit, that a gracious and living
soule is most sensible of the want of spiritu-
all meanes.

The reason is, because spirituall life
hath answerable taste, and hunger and
thirst after spirituall helps.

Wee see in nature, that those things
presse hardest upon it, that touch upon
the necessities of nature, rather than
those that touch upon delights; for these
further onely our comfortable being;
but necessities uphold our being it
selfe:

Cap. 1.

selfe; we see how famine wrought upon the Patriarks to go into *Egypt*: Where we may see what to judge of those who willingly excommunicate themselves from the assemblies of Gods people, where the Father, Son, and holy Ghost are present, where the prayers of holy men meet together in one, and as it were binde God and pull downe Gods blessing. No private devotion hath that report of acceptance from heaven.

Mark this

Obser. 3

A third generall point is, that a godly soule by reason of the life of grace, knowes when it is well with it, and when it is ill, when it is a good day with it, and when a bad; when God shines in the use of meanes, then the soule is as it were in heaven, when God withdraws himself, then it is in darknesse for a time. Where there is but onely a principle of nature without sanctifying grace, there men go plodding on and keep their rounds, and are at the end where they were at the beginning, not troubled with changes, because there is nothing within to be troubled; and therefore, dead meanes, quick meanes, or no meanes, all is one with

Cap. I.

with them, an argument of a dead soule. And so we come more particularly and directly to the words. *Why art thou cast downe O my soule? and why art thou disquieted within me? &c.*

Parts.

The words imply, 1 *Dauids* state wherein he was, and 2 expresse his carriage in that state.

I.

His state was such that in regard of outward condition, he was in variety of troubles, and that in regard of inward disposition of spirit, hee was first *cast downe*, and then *disquieted*.

2.

Now for his carriage of himselfe in this condition, and disposition, he dealeth roundly with himselfe: *David* reasoneth the case with *David*, and first checketh himselfe for being too much *cast downe*, and then for being too much *disquieted*.

And then layeth a charge upon himselfe *to trust in God*; wherein we have the duty he chargeth upon himselfe, which is to *trust in God*, and the grounds of the duty;

I.

First, from confidence of better times to come, which would yeeld him matter of *praising God*. And

The Soules Conflict.

9

And then by a representation of God unto him, as a saving God in all troubles, nay as salvation it selfe, an open glorious Saviour in the view of all, *The salvation of my countenance*, and all this enforced from Davids interest in God, *He is my God.*

Whence observe, first, from the state he was now in, that *since guilt and corruption hath been derived by the fall, into the nature of man, it hath been subjected to misery and sorrow, and that in all conditions: from the King that sitteth on the Throne to him that grindeth on the mill.* None ever hath been so good or so great as could raise themselves so high as to be above the reach of troubles.

And that choice part of mankind, the first fruits and excellency of the rest, (which we call the Church) more then others, which appears by consideration, both of the *Head, the Body and members of the Church.* For the *head* Christ, hee tooke our flesh as it was subject to misery after the fall, and was (in regard of that which he endured) both in life and death, a man of sorrowes.

Cap. I.

2.

Well spoken.

Obser. I.

I.

Christ the Head was a man of many sorrowes.

For

Cap. 1.

2.

The Church
~~is full of sorows.~~
 and is full
 of sorows.

For the *Body* the Church, It may say from the first to the last as it is *Psa. 129.* *From my youth up they have afflicted me.* The Church beganne in blood, hath growen up by blood, and shall end in blood, as it was redeemed by blood.

3.

The mem-
 bers of the
 Church
 have been
 and are full
 of crosses.

For the members, they are all predestinate to a conformity to Christ their Head, as in grace and glory, so in abasement, *Rom. 8.29.* neither is it a wonder, for those that are borne souldiers to meet with conflicts, for travellers to meet with hard usage, for sea-men to meet with storms, for strangers in a strange countrey (especially amongst their enemies) to meet with strange entertainment.

A& 14.22

A Christian is a man of another world, and here from home, which he would forget (if hee were not exercised here) and would take his passage for his countrey. But though all Christians agree and meet in this, that *through many afflictions wee must enter into heaven:* Yet, according to the diversity of place, parts and grace, there is a different cup measured to every one.

And

And therefore it is but a plea of the flesh, to except against the Crosse, *Never was poore creature distressed as I am*; this is but selfe-love: For was it not the case both of Head, Body and members, as wee see here in *David*, a principall member, when hee was brought to this case, thus to reason the matter with himselfe, *Why art thou cast downe O my soule? and why art thou disquieted within mee?*

Cap. 1.

V. se.

*Mark it
and to self
Love your
selves and
your selves*

Obser. 2

From the frame of *David's* spirit under these troubles, wee may observe, that, As the case is thus with all Gods people, to bee exercised with troubles, so, *They are sensible of them oftentimes, even to casting downe and discouraging.* And the reason is, they are flesh and blood, subject to the same passions, and made of the same mould, subject to the same impressions from without as other men; And their nature is upheld with the same supports and refreshings as others, the withdrawing and want of which affecteth them. And besides those troubles they suffer in Common with other men, by reason of their new advancement

Reas. 1.

2.

Cap. 2.

3.

advancement, and their new disposition they have in and from Christ their Head, they are more sensible in a peculiar manner of those troubles that any way touch upon that blessed condition, from a new life they have in and from Christ, which will better appeare if we come more particularly to a discovery of the more speciall causes of this distemper: some of which are, 1. *Without us.* 2. *Some within us.*

CAP. II.

Of discouragements from without.

Outward
causes of
discour-
agement.

I.
God him-
selfe,

I. **G**OD *himselfe*: who sometimes withdrawes the beames of his countenance from his children, whereupon the soule even of the strongest Christian is disquieted; when together with the crosse, God himselfe seemes to be an enemy unto them. The child of God when hee seeth that his troubles are mixed with Gods displeasure, and perhaps his conscience tells him that God hath a just quarrell against him,

him, because he hath not renewed his peace with his God, then this anger of God puts a sting into all other troubles, and addes to the disquiet. There were some ingredients of this divine temptation (as wee call it) in holy *David* at this time : though most properly a divine temptation be, when God appears unto us as an enemy, without any speciall guilt of any particular sin, as in *Iob*'s case.

And no marvaile if Christians bee from hence disquieted, when as the Son of God himselfe having alwayes before enjoyed the sweet communion with his Father, and now feeling an estrangement, that he might be a curse for us, complained in all his torments of nothing else, but *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* It is with the godly in this case, as with vapours drawne up by the Sun, which (when the extracting force of the Sun leaves them) fall downe againe to the earth from whence they are drawn. So when the soule, raised up and upheld by the beames of his countenance, is left of
C God,

Cap. 2.

A divine temptation, on, what.

Let us see
temptation
History of
our Saviour
and Redeemer
that as our
Saviour was
his, the Victory
shall be ours.
Mat. 27. 46

M

Cap. 1.

God, it presently begins to sinke. We see when the body of the Sun is partly hid from us (for totally it cannot in an Eclipse by the body of the Moon) that there is a drooping in the whole frame of nature: so it is in the soul, when there is any thing that comes between Gods gracious countenance and it.

2

In regard
of Satan,
who is all
for casting
downe.

Besides, if we looke downe to inferiour causes, the soule is oft cast downe by Satan, who is all for casting downe, and for disquieting. For being a cursed spirit, cast and tumbled down himselfe from heaven, where hee is never to come again, he is hereupon full of disquiet, carying a hell about himselfe, whereupon all that he labours for, is to cast downe and disquiet others, that they may be (as much as he can procure) in the same cursed condition with himselfe. He was not ashamed to set upon Christ himselfe with this temptation of casting downe, and thinks Christs members never low enough, till he can bring them as low as himselfe.

The devill
envies our
happinesse
first, and
last.

By his envy and subtlery wee were driven out of Paradice at the first, and
now

now he envies us the Paradice of a good conscience : for that is our Paradice untill we come to heaven ; into which no serpent shall ever creepe to tempt us. When Satan seeth a man strongly and comfortably walke with God, he cannot endure that a creature of meaner ranke by creation than himselfe, should enjoy such happinesse. Herein, like (some peevish men which are his instruments) men too contenti-ous, and bred up therein (as a Salamander in the fire,) who when they know the cause to be naught, and their adversaries to have the better title; yet (out of malice) they will follow them with suits and vexations, though they be not able to disable their opposites title : If their malice have not a vent in hurting some way, they will burst for anger.

It is just so with the devill, when he seeth men will to heaven, and that they have good title to it, then he follows them with all dejecting and uncomfortable tentations that he can : it is his continuall trade and course to seeke his rest in our disquiet, he is by beaten pra-

C 2

ctice

Cap. 2.

*Sin will
work in y
best blasp
het the best
have deame
and B.B.L.S
Sin to be a
most ungod
evil of this
Heart, and y
which is of
most displeasing
to himself
that the
Fleshy Heart
with his him
Loves Sin
yea this
pictures
him paeu-
singly. He
knows not
what to do
his cry is
O wretched
Man that
I am... A Heart
of flesh hates
Sin. A fleshy
Heart inclines
to Sin but a
Fleshy Heart
Loves Sin and
Glories in it.*

Cap. 1.

Etice and profession, a tempter in this kinde.

3.
Satan's in-
struments,
who are all
for casting
downe.

Psal. 35. 13.

Againe, what Satan cannot do him-
selfe by immediate suggestions, that
he labours to work by his instruments,
who are all for casting downe of those
who stand in their light, as those in the
Psalme, who cry, *Downe with him, down
with him, even to the ground*; a character
and stamp of which mens dispositions,
wee have in the verse before this text,
Mine enemies (saith David) reprobach me.

As sweet and as compassionate a man
as hee was, to *pray* and *put on sackcloth*
for them, yet he had enemies, and such
enemies, as did not suffer their malice
only to boile and concoct in their own
breasts, but out of the abundance of
their hearts, they reproached him in
words. There is nothing the nature of
man is more impatient of, than of re-
proaches; for there is no man so mean,
but thinks himselfe worthy of some
regard, and a reproachfull scorn shews
an utter disrespect, which issues from
the very superfluity of malice.

Neither went they behind his back,
but

but were so impudent to say *it to his face* : a malicious heart and a flandering tongue goe together, and though shame might have suppressed the uttering of such words, yet their insolent carriage spake as much in *Dauids heart* : We may see by the language of mens carriage what their heart saith, and what their tongue would vent, if they dared.

Cap. 1.

Psal. 39. 1.

And this their malice *was unwearied*, for they said *daily* unto him, as if it had been fed with a continuall spring : malice is an unsatiable monster, it will minister words, as rage ministers weapons. But what was that they said so reproachfully ? and said daily ? *Where is now thy God ?* they upbraided him with his singularity, they say not now, *where is God ?* but, *where is thy God*, that thou dost boast so much on ? as if thou hadst some speciall interest in Him. Where we see that the scope of the devill and wicked men is to shake the godlies Faith and confidence in their God : As Satan laboured to divide betwixt Christ and his Father ; *If thou*

Verse 3.

Mark 13.

Cap. 2.

Mat. 4.

This was
preached
in the be-
ginning of
the trou-
bles of the
Church.

Gen. 22. 14

Mark this

rest.

best the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread; So he labours to divide betwixt Father, and Son, and us: they labour to bring God in jealousy with *David*, as if God had neglected him, bearing himself so much upon God. They had some colour of this, for God at this time had veiled himself from *David*, as he does oft from his best children for the better discovery of the malice of wicked men: And doth not Satan tippe the tongues of the enemies of religion now, to insult over the Church now lying a bleeding? *What becomes of their Reformation, of their Gospel?* Nay, rather whats become of your eyes, wee may say unto them: For God is nearest to his childre when he seems farthest off. *In the mount of the Lord it shall be scene.* God is with them, and in them, though the wicked be not aware of it; it is all one, as if one should say betwixt the space of the new and old Moone, where is now the Moon? when as it is never nearer the Sun than at that time.

Where is now thy God?

In

In heaven, in earth, in mee, every where but in the heart of such as aske such questions, and yet there they shall finde him too in his time, filling their consciences with his wrath; and then, Where is their God? where are their great friends, their riches, their honors, which they set up as a god? what can they availe them now?

But how was *David* affected with these reproaches? their words were as swords, *as with a sword in my bones, &c.* they spake daggers to him, they cut him to the quicke when they toucht him in his God, as if he had neglected his servants, when as the devill himself regards those who serve his turn; touch a true godly man in his Religion, and you touch his life & his best freehold, hee lives more in his God than in himselfe; so that we may see here, there is a murther of the tongue, a wounding tongue as well as a healing tongue: men think themselves freed from murther, if they kill none, or if they shed no blood, whereas they cut others to the heart with bitter words. It is good

Cap. 2.
Answ.
Mark
ohio.

Verse 10.

A murther
of the
tongue.

Cap. 3.

*Mark 11.**Judg. 1. 24.*

to extend the Commandement to awake the conscience the more, and breed humility, when men see there is a murdering of the tongue. Wee see *David* therefore upon this reproach to be presently so moved, as to fall out with himselfe for it. *Why art thou so cast down and disquieted o my soul?* This bitter taunt ran so much in his minde, that he expresseth it twice in this Psalm; He was sensible that they struck at God through his sides; what they spake in scorne and lightly, hee tooke heavily. And indeed, when religion suffers, if there be any heavenly fire in the heart, it will rather breake out, than not discover it selfe at all. We see by daily experience, that there is a speciall force in words uttered from a subtle head, a false heart, and a smooth tongue, to weaken the hearts of professors, by bringing an evill report upon the strict profession of religion: as the *cunning* and false *spies* did upon the *good land*, as if it were not onely in vaine, but dangerous to appeare for Christ in evill times. If the example of such as have faint

faint spirits will discourage in an army, (as wee see in *Gideons* History) then what will speech enforced both by example and with some shew of reason doe?

Cap. 3.
Iudges 7.

To let others passe, we need not goe further than our selves, for to finde causes of discouragement, there is a seminary of them within us. Our flesh, an enemy so much the worse, by how much the nearer, will be ready to upbraid us within us, *where is now thy God?* why shouldest thou stand out in a profession that findes no better entertainment?

4
Discouragement comes first
our selves.

*This is all
I goe tooke*

CAP. III.

Of discouragements from within.

BUt to come to some particular causes within us.

There is cause oft in the body of those in whom a melancholy temper prevaieth, darknesse makes men fearefull: Melancholy persons are in a perpetuall darknesse, all things seeme black

Cap. 3.

Simile.

5
A deluded
fancy cau-
ses disqui-
etnesse.

blatke and darke unto them, their spi-
rits as it were dyed black. Now to
him that is in darknesse, all things seem
black and dark, the sweetest comforts
are not lightsome enough unto those
that are deepe in melancholy. It is
(without great watchfulnesse) Satans
bath; which he abuseth as his owne
weapon to hurt the soule, which by
reason of its sympathy with the body
is subject to be misled: as we see where
there is a suffusion of the eye by reason
of distemper of humours, or where
things are presented through a glasse to
the eye; things seeme to be of the same
colour: so, whatsoever is presented to
a melancholy person, comes in a darke
way to the soule. From whence it is
that their fancy being corrupted, they
judge amisse, even of outward things, as
that they are sicke of such and such a
disease, or subject to such and such a
danger, when it is nothing so; how fit
are they then to judge of things remo-
ved from sense, as of their spirituall e-
state in Christ?

2.

To come to causes more neare the
soule

soule it self, as when there is want of that which should be in it, as of knowledge in the *understanding*, &c. Ignorance (being darknesse) is full of false feares; In the night time men thinke every bush a theefe; our forefathers in time of ignorance were frightened with every thing, therefore it is the policy of popish tyrants taught them from the prince of darknesse, to keep the people in darknesse, that so they might make them fearefull, and then abuse that fearefulness to superstition; that they might the better rule in their consciences for their owne ends; and that so having intangled them with false feares, they might heale them again with false cures.

Againe, though the soule be not ignorant, yet if it be forgetfull and mindlesse, if, as Heb. 12. the Apostle saith, *You have forgot the cōsolation that speaks unto you, &c.* We have no more present actuall comfort, then we have remembrance: help a godly mans memory, and help his comfort, like unto charcoale which having once been kindled,

are

Cap. 3.

Causes privative, of discouragement in our selves.

1

Ignorance in the understanding, is the

Curved Harrow of Unbelief therefore the Doctrines of the Trinity and their Offices and Sacraments in these times are but a misty light be prepared for the People.

2.

Forgetfulness can seeth discouragement.

Cap. 3.

are the more easie to take fire. He that hath formerly knowne things, takes ready acquaintance of them againe (as old friends :) things are not strange to him.

3.
Not dutly
prizing of
comforts.

Job 15. 11.

And further, *want of setting due price upon comforts*; as the Israelites were taxed for setting nothing by the pleasant land. It is a great fault, when (as they said to Job) *the consolations of the Almighty seem light, and small unto us*, unlesse we have some outward comfort which we linger after.

4.
A childish
peevishnes

Aequial

Gen. 36.

1 Kings.

Adde unto this, *a childish kinde of peevishnesse*: when they have not what they would have, (like children) they throw away al; which (though it be very offensive to Gods Spirit) yet it seizeth often upon men otherwise gracious. *Abraham* himselfe (wanting children) undervalued all other blessings. *Ionas*, because hee was crossed of his gourd, was weary of his life. The like may be said of *Elias*, flying from *Iezebel*. This peevishnesse is increased by a too much flattering of their griefe, so farre as to justifie it; like *Ionas*, I doe well

well to be angry even unto death, he would stand to it. Some with *Rachel* are so peremptory, that they will not be comforted, as if they were in love with their grievances. Wilfull men are most vexed in their crosses: It is not for those to bee wilfull that have not a great measure of wisdom to guide their wils; for God delights to have his will of those that are wedded to their own wils: as in *Pharaoh*. No men more subject to discontentments, than those who would have all things after their owne way.

Againe, one maine ground is, *False reasoning*, and error in our discourse, as that wee have no grace when wee feelee none; feeling is not alwayes a fit rule to judge our states by; that God hath rejected us, because we are crossed in outward things, when as this issues from Gods wisdom and love. How many imagine their *fallings* to bee *fallings*, and their *fallings*, to be *fallings* away? *Infirmities* to be *Presumptions*? every sin against *Conscience*, to bee the sinne against the *Holy Ghost*? unto which

Cap 3.

Ionah 4. 9.

Jer 31. 15.

Willfull

or obstinate

How it might

be rendered. It

not with this

grievance, my

deare offering

but because

you cannot be

happy in your

will it is taken

away and he

is offering

to do it.

5.

False rea-

soning, er-

roneous

discourse.

For believers

should not

measure them-

selves by their

frames, but

by what faith,

grace, and

truthfull word.

Cap. 3.

A double
cunning of
Satan, ac-
cording to
the humor
of his pat-
ents.

God keeps
you from
this sad
Delusion.

6.

A false me-
thod and
order in
judging of
our estates

Mark this
and God
teach you
to hope it
fast and
constantly
to set it
before you
preachers.

which misapprehensions, weake and dark spirits are subject. And Satan (as a cunning Rhetorician) here enlargeth the fancy, to apprehend things bigger than they are, Satan abuseth confident spirits another contrary way: to apprehend great sinnes as little, and little as none. Some also thinke that they have no grace, because they have not so much as grown Christians; whereas, there be severall ages in Christ. Some againe are so desirous and enlarged after what they have not, that they minde not what they have. Men may be rich, though they have not millions, and be not Emperours.

Likewise, some are much troubled, because they proceed by a false method and order in judging of their estates. They will begin with *Election*, which is the highest step of the ladder; whereas they should begin from a worke of grace wrought within their hearts, from Gods calling them by his Spirit, and their answer to his call, and so raise themselves upwards to know their *Election* by their answer to Gods calling.

calling. Give all diligēce saith S. Peter, to make your calling and Election sure : your election by your calling. God descends downe unto us. from election to calling, and so to sanctification : wee must ascend to him beginning where he ends. Otherwise it is as great folly as in removing of a pile of wood, to begin at the lowest first, and so (besides the needlesse trouble,) to bee in danger to have the rest fall upon our heads: Which besides ignorāce argues pride, appearing in this, that they would bring God to their conceits, and be at an end of their worke before they beginne.

This great secret of Gods eternall love to us in Christ, is hidden in his breast, and doth not appeare to us, untill in the use of means God by his Spirit discovereth the same unto us ; The Spirit letteth into the soule so much life and sense of Gods love in particular to us, as draweth the soule to Christ, from whom it draweth so much vertue as changeth the frame of it, and quickneth it to duty, which duties are not grounds

Cap. 3.
2 Pet. 1.
Mark
this along
to the end

consequat

Cap. 3.

*Write this.
and pray to
have the
persuasion
rooted in
your heart.*

Mat. 13. 20

Jehovah

Jehovah the

grounds of our state in grace, but issues, springing from a good state before, & thus far they help us, in judging of our condition, that though they be not to be rested in, yet as streames they leade us to the spring-head of grace from whence they arise.

And of signes, some be more apt to deceive us, as being not so certaine, as *delight & joy in hearing the Word*, as appeareth in the *third ground*: Some are more constant and certaine, as love to those that are truly good, and to all such, and because they are such, &c. these as they are wrought by the Spirit, so the same Spirit giveth evidence to the soule of the truth of them, and leadeth us to faith from whence they come, and faith leads us to the discovery of Gods love made knowne to us in hearing the Word opened. The same Spirit openeth the truth to us, and our understandings to conceive of it, and our hearts to close with it by faith, not onely as a truth, but as a truth belonging to us.

Now this faith is manifested, *(either by*

by it selfe reflecting upon it selfe the light of faith, discovering both it selfe and other things, or by the cause of it, or by the effect, or by all; Faith is oft more knowne to us in the fruit of it, then in it selfe; as in plants, the fruits are more apparent than the sappe and roote. But the most setled knowledge is from the cause, as when I know I beleeve, because in hearing Gods gracious promises opened and offered unto me, the Spirit of God carryeth my soule to cleave to them as mine owne portion. Yet the most familiar way of knowledge of our estates is from the effects to gather the cause, the cause being oftentimes more remote and spirituall, the effects more obvious and visible. All the vigour and beauty in Nature which wee see, comes from a secret influence from the heavens which we see not; In a cleare morning wee may see the beames of the Sun shining upon the top of hils and houses before wee can see the Sunne it selfe.

Things in the working of them, doe issue from the cause, by whose force

D

they

Cap. 3.

*By the way
for faith is
in strength
and the
looking
to Jesus.*

*This is our
good Synthe
Eph. 1. 13.*

Gal. 3. 12.

*1st Cor. 13.
1st Tim. 3. 16.*

*2nd Tim. 3. 17.
Heb. 4. 12.*

Cor. 3. 14.

1 Ioh. 4.
20.

Iehovah

Comfort
sought in
sanctifica-
tion.

Ioh. 8. 12.

Apostle
of this.

they had their being ; but our knowing of things ariseth from the effect, where the cause endeth ; wee know God must love us before wee can love him, and yet we oft *first* know that *wee love him* ; the love of God is the cause why we love our brother, and yet we know we love *our brother whom we see* more clearly, *than God whom we doe not see.*

It is a spirituall peevishnesse that keepes men in a perplexed condition, that they neglect these helps to judge of their estates by, whereas God takes liberty to helpe us sometime to a discovery of our estate by the effects, sometimes by the cause, &c. And it is a sinne to set light by any worke of the Spirit, and the comfort we might have by it, and therefore we may well adde this as one cause of disquietnesse in many, that they grieve the Spirit, by quarrelling against themselves, and the work of the Spirit in them.

Another cause of disquiet is, that men by a naturall kind of Popery seeke for their comfort too much in sanctification, neglecting justification, relying

too

too much upon their owne performances; Saint Paul was of another minde, accounting all but dung and drosse, compared to the righteousnesse of Christ. This is that garment, wherewith being decked we please our husband, and wherein we get the blessing. This giveth satisfaction to the conscience, as satisfying God himselfe, being performed by God the Sonne, and approved therefore by God the Father; Hereupon the soule is quieted, and Faith holdeth out this as a shield against the displeasure of GOD, and temptations of Satan: why did the Apostles in their Prefaces joyne grace and peace together, but that wee should seeke for our peace in the free grace and favour of God in Christ.

No wonder why Papists maintaine doubting, who hold salvation by workes; because Satan joyning together with our consciences, will alwayes finde some flaw even in our best performances; Hereupon the doubting and misgiving soule comes to make this absurd demand, as, *Who shall ascend to heaven?* which is all one as to fetch Christ

Cap. 3.

1. Cor. 13.

Phil. 3.

1. Cor. 13.

1. Cor. 13.

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1. Cor. 13.

Psal. 113.

1. Cor. 13.

1. Cor. 13.

Cap. 3.

conclusion
on this.

Rom. 8. 39

To have
and main-
taine true
comfort, we
must grow
up in ho-
linessWant of a
cleare con-
science rai-
ses tumults
in the soul.

Note this

Rom. 8. 13

from heaven, and so bring him downe to suffer on the Crosse againe. Whereas if wee beleeeve in Christ, wee are as sure to come to heaven as Christ is there: Christ ascending and descending with all that hee hath done is ours. So that *neither height nor depth can separate us from Gods love in Christ.*

But wee must remember, though the maine pillar of our comfort bee in the free forgivenesse of our sinnes; yet if there bee a neglect in growing in holiness, the soule will never bee soundly quiet, because it will bee prone to question the truth of justification, and it is as proper for sinne to raise doubts and feares in the conscience, as for rotten flesh and wood to breed wormes. And therefore wee may well joine this as a cause of disquietnesse, *the neglect of keeping a cleare conscience.* Sinne, like *Achan*, or *Ionas* in the ship, is that which causeth stormes within and without; where there is not a pure conscience, there is not a pacified conscience, and therefore though some thinking to save themselves whole in justification, *neglect*

neglect the cleansing of their natures,
and ordering of their lives: yet in
time of temptation, they will finde it
more troublesome than they thinke.
For a conscience guilty of many neg-
lects, and of allowing it selfe in any sin,
to lay claime to Gods mercy, is to doe
as we see Mountebanks sometimes doe,
who wound their flesh to try conclusi-
ons upon their owne bodies, how sove-
raigne the salve is; yet oftentimes they
come to feele the smart of their pre-
sumption, by long and desperate
wounds. So God will let us see what it
is to make wounds to try the precious-
nesse of his Balme: such may go mour-
ning to their graves. And though (per-
haps) with much wrestling with God,
they may get assurance of the pardon
of their sinnes, yet their conscience will
bee still trembling (like as *Dauids*,
though *Nathan* had pronounced unto
him the forgivenessse of his sin) till God
at length speakes further peace, even
as the water of the sea (after a storme)
is not presently still, but moves and
trembles a good while after the storme

Cap. 3.
Act. 16. 6
114. 115.

1. Cor. 13. 12

Psalm. 51.

Cap. 3.

Gal. 6:16

Nara

Chis

Ignorance
of our
Christian
liberty.

Gal. 6:16

Danger of
abusing
Christian
liberty.

Gal. 6:16

10.
Want of
employ-
ment.

is over. A Christian is a new creature, and walketh by rule, and so farre as hee walketh *according to his rule peace is upon him*. Loose walkers that regard not their way must thinke to meet with sorrowes instead of peace. Watchfulnesse is the preserver of peace. It is a deep spirituall judgement to find peace in an ill way.

Some againe, reape the fruit of their *ignorance of Christian liberty*, by unnecessary scruples and doubts. It is both unthankfulnesse to God, and wrong to our selves, to be ignorant of the extent of Christian liberty; *It makes melody to Satan, to see Christians troubled with that they neither should or need*. Yet there is danger in stretching Christian liberty beyond the bounds. For a man may condemne himselfe in that he approves, as in not walking circumspectly in regard of circumstances, and so breed his owne disquiet, and give scandall to others.

Sometimes also, God suffers men to be disquieted for want of imployment, who in shunning labour, procure trouble

ble to themselves; and by not doing that which is needfull, they are troubled with that which is unnecessary.

An unemploy'd life is a burden to it selfe.

God is a pure Act, alwayes working, alwayes doing: and the neerer our soule comes to God, the more it is in action, and the freer from disquiet. Men experimentally feele that comfort in doing that which belongs unto them; which before they longed for, and went without; a heart not exercised in some honest labour, workes trouble out of it selfe.

Againe, Omission of duties and offices of love, often troubles the peace of good people; for even in the time of death when they looke for peace and desire it most, then looking backe upon their former failings, and seeing opportunity of doing good wanting to their desire; (the parties perhaps being deceased to whom they owed more respect) are hereupon much disquieted, and so much the more, because they see now hope of the like advantages cut off

Cap. 3.

*(rather
over. love)*

II.
Omission
of offices
and duties
of love.

*Note
This.*

Cap. 3.

Rom. 13. 8

Note that

you are

12.

Want of
resolution
in good
things.

1 King. 18.

21.

James 1. 6.

A Christian life is full of duties, and the peace of it is not maintained without much fruitfulness and looking about us: debt is a disquieting thing to an honest minde, and *debt is duty*. Hereupon the Apostle layeth the charge, *that we should owe nothing to any man, but love.*

(Againe, one speciall cause of too much disquiet, is, *want of firme resolution in good things*. The soule cannot but bee disquieted when it knowes not what to cleave unto, like a ship tossed with contrary winde; Halting is a deformed and troublesome gesture; so halting in Religion, is not onely troublesome to others, and odious, but also *disquiets* our selves. *If God be God, cleave to him.* If the duties of religion be such as will bring peace of conscience at the length, be religious to purpose, practice them in the particular passages of life. Wee should labour to have a cleare judgement, and from thence a resolved purpose; a *wavering* minded man is inconstant in all his wayes. God will not speake peace to a staggering spirit that

that hath alwaies its Religion, and its way to choose. Uncertaine men are alwaies unquiet men: and giving too much way to passion maketh men in particular consultationsunsetled. This is the reason why in particular cases, when the matter concerns our selves, we cannot judge so clearly as in general truths, because Satan raiseth a mist betweene us and the matter in question.)

2 Positive Causes

May be, 1. *When men lay up their comfort too much on outward things*, which being subje& to much inconstancy and change, breed disquiet. Vexation alwaies followes vanity, when vanity is not apprehended to bee where it is. In that measure wee are cast downe in the disappointing of our hopes, as wee were too much lifted up in expectation of good from them. Whence proceed these complaints; such a friend hath failed mee: I never thought to have fallen into this condition; I had settled my joy in this childe, in this friend, &c. but this is to build our comfort upon things that have no firme founda-

Cap. 3.

note all this between the (-)

When men lay up too much comfort in outward things.

Cap. 3.

Prov. 30.

Isaiah
40. 31.

Mic. 2. 10.

Psal. 39.

foundation, to build castles in the aire (as wee use to say.) Therefore it is a good desire of the Wise man Agur, to desire God, *to remove from us vanity & lies*, that is, a vaine and a false apprehension pitching upon things that are vaine and lying, promising a contentment to our selves from the creature, which it cannot yeeld; confidence in vaine things makes a vaine heart, the heart becomming of the nature of the thing it relies on: wee may say of all earthly things as the Prophet speaketh, *Here is not our rest.*

It is no wonder therefore, that worldly men are oft *cast downe and disquieted*, when they walke in a vaine shadow, as likewise that men given much to recreations should be subject to passionate distemper, because here things fall out otherwise then they lookt for: recreations being about matters that are variable, which especially falls out in games of hazard, wherein they oft spare not Divine Providence it self, but breake out into blasphemy.

Likewise men that graspe more *businesses*

Cap. 3.

*This holds
Both in
Reason
and
Religion.*

sinesses than they can discharge, must needs beare both the blame and the grieft of losing or marring many busi-
nesses. It being almost impossible to doe many things so well as to give content to Conscience; Hence it is that covetous and busie men trouble both their hearts and their houses; though some men from a largeness of parts, and a speciall dexterity in affaires may turne over much; yet the most capacious heart hath its measure, and when the cup is full, a little drop may cause the rest to spill. There is a spirituall surfet, when the soule is over-charged with businesse; it is fit the soule should have its meet burthen and no more.

As likewise, those that depend too much upon the opinions of other men. A very light matter will refresh, and then againe discourage a minde that rests too much upon the liking of others. Men that seeke themselves too much abroad, finde themselves disquieted at home; even good men many times are too much troubled with the unjust censures of other men, specially

in

2.

Too much relying upon the opinions of others.

Sic leve sic parvum est animum quod laudis avarum, subruit aut reficit.

Cap. 3.

Y Sam. 1.

14.

3.
Too much
looking &
poring on
evils, in our
selves and
abroad.

Philip. 4.4

in the day of their trouble : It was *Iobs* case ; and it is a heavy thing to have affliction added to affliction : It was *Hannahs* case, who being troubled in spirit, was censured by *Elis*, for distemper in braine; but for vain men who live more to reputation than to conscience, it cannot bee that they should long enjoy settled quiet, because those in whose good opinion they desire to dwell, are ready often to take up contrary conceits upon slender grounds.

It is also a ground of over-much trouble, when wee looke too much and too long upon the ill in our selves and abroad ; we may fixe our eyes too long even upon sinne it selfe, considering that wee have not onely a remedy against the hurt by sinne, but a commandement *to rejoyce alwayes in the Lord*. Much more may wee erre in poring too much upon our afflictions ; wherein we may finde alwaies in our selves upon search, a cause to justifie God, and alwayes something left to comfort us : Though we naturally minde more one crosse than a hundred favours, dwelling

ling over-long upon the sore.

So likewise, our mindes may be too much taken up in consideration of the *miserics of the times* at home and abroad, as if Christ did not rule in the midst of his enemies, and would not helpe all in due time; or as if the condition of the Church in this world, were not for the most part in an afflicted and conflicting condition. Indeed there is a perfect rest both for the soules and bodies of Gods people, but that is not in this world, but is kept for hereafter; here we are in a sea, where what can wee looke for, but stormes?

To insist upon no more, one cause is, that wee doe usurpe upon God, and take his office upon us, by troubling our selves in forecasting the event of things, whereas our worke is onely to doe our worke and be quiet, as children when they please their parents, take no further thought; our trouble is the fruit of our folly in this kinde.

That which we should observe from all that hath beene said is, that wee bee not over-hasty in censuring others, when

Vse 1.

Cap. 3.

when wee see their spirits out of temper, for we see how many things there are that worke strongly upon the weake nature of man. *We may sin more by harsh censure, than they by overmuch distemper:* as in *Iobs* case, it was a matter rather of just griefe and pity, than great wonder or heavy censure.

Vse 2.

And, for our selves: If our estate be calme for the present, yet wee should labour to prepare our hearts, not onely for an alteration of estate, but of spirit, unlesse wee bee marvellous carefull before hand, that our spirits fall not down with our Condition. And if it befalls us to finde it otherwise with our soules then at other times, wee should so farre labour to beare it, as that wee doe not judge it our owne case alone, when wee see here *David* thus to complaine of himselfe, *Why art thou cast downe O my soule? &c.*

CHAP.

CAP. IV.

Cap. 4.

of casting downe our selves, and specially by sorrow. Evils thereof.

TO returne againe to the words, *Why art thou cast downe O my soule? &c.* or *Why dost thou cast downe thy selfe?* or, *art cast downe by thy selfe?* Whence we may further observe, *That wee are prone to cast downe our selves,* we are accessary to our owne trouble, and weave the web of our owne sorrow, and hamper our selves in the cords of our owne twining. God neither loves nor wills that we should be too much cast down. Wee see our Saviour Christ how carefull hee was that his *Disciples* should not bee troubled, and therefore hee labours to prevent that trouble which might arise by his suffering and departure from them, by a heavenly Sermon, *Let not your hearts be troubled, &c.* Hee was troubled himselfe that wee should not bee troubled: The ground therefore of our disquiet is chiefly from our selves.

Obfer. I

Ioh. 14. 1.

Cap. 4

selves, though Satan will have a hand in it. Wee see many like sullen birds in a cage, beat themselves to death. This casting downe of our selves, is not from humility but from Pride, wee must have our will, or God shall not have a good looke from us, but as pettish and peevisish children, we hang our heads in our bosome, because our wils are crost.

vse.

Therefore in all our troubles wee should looke first home to our owne hearts, and stop the storme there; for wee may thanke our owne selves, not onely for our troubles, but likewise for overmuch troubling our selves in trouble. It was not the troubled condition that so disquieted *Dauids* soule, for if he had had a quiet minde, it would not have troubled him: But *David* yeelded to the discouragements of the flesh, and the flesh (so farre as it is unsubdued) is like the Sea that is alwayes casting mire and dirt of doubts, discouragements and murmurings in the soule; let us therefore lay the blame where it is to bee laid.

Againe,

Againe, wee see, *It is the nature of sorrow to cast downe, as of joy to lift up.* Griefe is like lead to the soule, heaue and cold; it sinks downwards, and carries the soule with it. The poore *Publican* to shew that his soule was cast downe under the sight of his finnes; hung downe his head, the position of his body was sutable to the disposition of his minde, his heart and head were cast downe alike; And it is Satans practice to goe over the hedge where it is lowest: hee addes more weights to the soule, by his tentations and vexations. His sinne cast him out of heauen, and by his temptations, hee cast us out of our Paradise, and ever since, he labours to cast us deeper into sinne, wherein his scope is, to cast us either into too much trouble for sin, or presumption in sinne, which is but a lifting up, to cast us down into deepe despaire at length, and so at last (if Gods mercy stop not his malice) he will cast us as low as himselfe, even into hell it selfe.

The ground hereof is, because *as the joy of the Lord doth strengthen, so doth*

E

sorrow

Cap. 4.
Obser. 2

Luk. 18. 13

Reason.
How sorrow doth weaken the soule.

Cap. 4.

sorrow weaken the soule. How doth it weaken?

1.

1. By weakning the execution of the functions thereof, because it drinketh up the spirits, which are the instruments of the soule.

2.

2. Because it contracteth, and draweth the soule into it selfe from communion of that comfort it might have with God or man. And then the soule being left alone, if *it falleth*, hath none to *raise it up*.

Ecd. 4. 10.

Vse.
How to
prevent ca-
sting down

Pro. 12. 25

Matth. 11.

Therefore, if wee will prevent casting downe, let us *prevent grieve the cause of it*, and sinne the cause of that. Experience proves that true which the Wiseman sayes, *Heavinesse in the heart of a man makes it stoope, but a good word makes it better*. It bowes downe the soule, and therefore our blessed Saviour inviteth such unto him; *Come unto mee yee who are heavy laden with the burden of your sinnes*. The body bends under a heavy burden, so likewise the soule hath its burden, *Why art thou cast downe O my soule? Why so disquieted?*
&c.

Whence,

Cap. 4.
Obfer. I

Reason.

Whence, wee see 1. that casting downe breeds disquieting: Because it springs from pride, which is a turbulent Passion, when as men cannot stoope to that condition which God would have them in; this proceeds from discontentment, and that from pride, As wee see, a vapour inclosed in a cloud causeth a terrible noise of thunder, whilst it is pent up there, and seeketh a vent; So all the noise within proceeds from a discontented swelling vapour. It is aire inclosed in the bowels of the earth which shakes it, which all the soure windes cannot doe.

No creature under heaven so low cast downe as Satan, none more lifted up in pride; none so full of discord; the impurest spirits are the most disquiet and stormy spirits, troublesome to themselves and others; for when the soule leaves G O D once, and looks downewards, what is there to stay it from disquiet? remove the needle from the pole starre, and it is alwayes stirring and trembling, never quiet till it be right againe. So displace the soule

E 2

by

Cap. 4.

by taking it from God, and it will never bee quiet. The devill cast out of heaven and out of the Church, keepes a dooe, so doe unruly spirits led by him.

Now I come to the remedies.

Remedies
against ca-
sting down
and disqui-
eting.

1. *By expostulation with himselfe.*

2. *By laying a charge upon himselfe :
(Trust in God.)*

It is supposed here, that there is no reason (which the Wisedome from above allowes to bee a reason) why men should bee discouraged, although the wisdome from beneath which takes part with our corruption, will seldome want a plea. Nay there is not onely no reason for it, but there are strong reasons against it, there being a world of evill in it.

Reasons
against dis-
couragement.

I.

It indispo-
ses to all
good du-
ties.

For, 1. It indisposes a man to all good duties, it makes him like an instrument out of tune, and like a body out of joint, that moveth both uncomely and painfully. It unfits to duties to God, who loves a cheerefull giver, and especially a thanksgiver. Whereupon the Apostle joines them both together,

Cap. 4.
1 Thess. 5.

In all things bee thankfull, and rejoyce evermore. In our communion with God in the Sacraments, joy is a chiefe ingredient. So in duties to men, if the spirit be dejected, they are unwelcome, and lose the greatest part of their life and grace; A cheerefull and a free spirit in duty is that which is most accepted in duty. Wee observe not so much what, as from what affection a thing is done.

1. It is a great wrong to God himselfe, and it makes us conceive blacke thoughts of him, as if He were an enemy. What an injury is it to a gracious father, that such whom he hath followed with many gracious evidences of his favour and love, should bee in so ill a frame, as once to call it into question?

2.
It wrongs God, making us thinke a-misse of him.

3. So, it makes a man forgetfull of all former blessings, and stops the influence of Gods grace, for the time present, and for that to come.

3.
It makes a man forget former blessings, &c.

4. So again, For receiving of good: It makes us unfit to receive mercies; a quiet soule is the seate of wisdom. Therefore, *Meeknesse* is required for the

4.
It makes us unfit to receive good.

Cap. 4.

Iam. 1. 21.

receiving of that ingrafted word which is able to save our soules. Till the Spirit of God meekens the soule, (say what you will) it mindes nothing, the soule is not empty and quiet enough to receive the seed of the Word. It is ill sowing in a storme, so a stormy spirit will not suffer the Word to take place. *Men are deceived when they thinke a dejected spirit to be an humbled spirit.* Indeed it is so when we are cast downe in the sense of our owne unworthinesse, and then as much raised up in the confidence of Gods mercy. But when we cast our selves downe sullenly, and neglect our comforts, or undervalue them, it proceeds from pride, for it controules (as much as in us lies) the wisdom and justice of God, when wee thinke with our selves, why should it be so with us? as if wee were wiser to dispose of our selves than God is. It disposeth us for entertaining any temptation. Satan hath never more advantage than upon discontent.

5.
It hinders
beginners
comming
into Gods
wayes.

5. Besides, it keepes off beginners from comming in, and entring into the wayes

waies of God, bringing an ill report upon Religion, causing men to charge it falsely for an uncomfortable way, when as men never feele what true comfort meaneth, till they give up themselves to God. And it damps likewise the spirits of those that walke the same way with us, when as wee should (as good travellers) cheere up one another both by word and example. In such a case, the wheelles of the soule are taken off, or else, (as it were) want oile, whereby the soule passeth on very heavily, and no good action comes off from it as it should, which breeds not onely uncomfortablenesse, but unsetlednesse in good courses. For a man will never goe on comfortably and constantly in that which hee heavily undertakes. That's the reason why uncheerfull spirits seldom hold out as they should. Saint Peter knew this well, and therefore hee willeth, that there should be *quietnesse and peace betwixt husband and wife, that their prayers be not hindered*; Insinuating that their prayers are hindered by family breaches. For by that meanes,

1 Pet. 3.

Cap. 4.

those two (that should be one flesh and spirit) are divided, and so made two, and when they should minde duty, their minde is taken up with wrongs done by the one to the other.

Mat. 5. 24.

Exod. 9.

There is nothing more required for the performing of holy duties than uniting of spirits; and therefore God would not have the sacrifice brought to the Altar, before reconciliation with our brother. He esteems peace so highly, that hee will have his owne service stay for it. Wee see when *Moses* came to deliver the *Israelites out of bondage*, their minde was so taken up with their griefe, that there was no body within to give *Moses* an answer, their soules went altogether after their ill usage.

Vse.

Therefore wee should all endeavour and labour for a calmed spirit, that wee may the better serve God in praying to him, and praising of him; and serve one another in love, that wee may be fitted to doe and receive good: that wee may make our passage to heaven more easie and cheerefull, without drooping and hanging the wing. So much

much as we are quiet and cheerefull upon good grounds, so much we live, and are as it were in heaven. So much as we yeeld to discouragement, wee lose so much of our life and happinesse, cheerefulnessse being (as it were) that life of our lives, and the spirit of our spirits by which they are more enlarged to receive happinesse and to expresse it.

Cap. 5.

CAP. V.

Remedies of casting downe: To cite the soule: and presse it to give an account.

BUt to come to some helps.

First, in that hee expostulates with himselfe, wee may observe, that *One way to raise a dejected soule, is, to cite it before it selfe, and as it were to reason the case.* God hath set up a court in mans heart, wherein the conscience hath the office, both of *Informer, accuser, witnesse, and Judge*; And if matters were well carried within our selves, this prejudging would bee a prevention of future judging. It is a great mercy of

Obser. 1

The court of conscience in man.

Cap. 5.

Judgement
must passe
first or last,
without or
within up-
on us.

of God, that the credit and comfort of man are so provided for, that hee may take up matters in himselfe, and so prevent publike disgrace. But if there bee not a faire dispatch and transaction in this inferiour court within us, there will bee a review in a higher Court. Therefore by slubbering over our matters, we put God and our selves to more trouble than needs. For a judgement must passe first, or last, either within us, or without us, upon all unwarrantable distempers. We must not onely be ready to give an account of our *faith*, upon what Grounds wee beleeve; but of all our *actions*, upon what grounds we do what we do; and of our *Passions*, upon what ground wee are passionate: as in a well governed State, uprore and sedition is never stirred, but account must be given. Now in a mutiny, the presence and speech of a venerable man, composeth the mindes of the disordered multitude; so likewise in a mutiny of the spirit, the authority that God hath put into Reason (as a beame of himselfe) commands silence, and puts

puts all in order againe.

And there is good reason for it, for man is an understanding creature, and hath a rule given him to live by, and therefore is to bee countable of every *thought, word, action, passion*. Therefore the first way to quiet the soule, is, to aske a reason of the tumult raised, and then many of our distempers for shame will not appeare, because (though they rage in silent darknesse) yet they can say nothing for themselves, being summoned before strength of judgement and reason. Which is the reason why passionate men are loath that any court should be kept within them; but labour to stop judgement all they can. If men would but give themselves leave to consider better of it, they would never yeeld to such unreasonable motions of the soule: If they could but gaine so much of their unruly passions, as to reason the matter within themselves, to heare what their consciences can tell them in secret, there would not be such offensive breakings out. And therefore, if wee be ashamed to heare others upbraiding

Cap. 5.
Reason.

Distempers
fall downe
when they
are ar-
raigned
before
Reason.

Want of
considera-
tion, raises
and main-
taines our
distempers.

Cap. 5.

In discouragement,
we crosse
our owne
principles.

Corruption
of the
heart sets
the wit a
worke.

1 King. 12

A. 24. 35

upbraiding us, let us for shame hear our selves; And if no reason can bee given, what an unreasonable thing is it for a man endowed with reason to contrary his owne principles; and to be carried as a beast without reason? or if there be any reason to be given, then, this is the way to scanne it, see whether it will hold water or not. We shall finde some reasons (if they may be so called) to be so corrupt and soule, that (if the judgement bee not corrupted by them) they dare not bee brought to light, but alwayes appeare under some colour and pretext, for sinne (like the devill) is afraid to appeare in its owne likenesse, and men seek out faire glosses, for soule intentions. The hidden secret reason is one, the open is another: the heart being corrupt, sets the wit a worke, to satisfie corrupt will; such kinde of men are afraid of their owne consciences (as *Ahab* of *Micajah*) because they feare it would deale truly with them: and therefore they take either present order for their consciences, or else (as *Felix* put off *Paul*) they adorne the court

court for another time. Such men are strangers at home, afraid of nothing more than of themselves; and therefore in a fearefull condition, because they are reserved for the judgement of the great day, if God doth not before that set upon them in this world. If men carried away with their owne lusts, would give but a little check, and stop themselves in their posting to hell, and aske, *What have I done? What am I now about? Whither will this course tend? How will it end? &c.* Undoubtedly men would begin to bee wise. Would the blasphemers give away his soule for nothing (for there is no engagement of profit or pleasure in this, as in other sins, but it issues meerly out of irreverence, and a superfluity of prophanenesse;) would hee (I say) draw so heavy a guilt upon himselfe for nothing, if he would but make use of his reason? Would an old man (when hee is very neare his journeyes end) make longer provision for a short way if hee would aske himselfe a Reason? But indeed Covetousnesse is an unreasonable vice.

Cap. 9.

The soule
expostulation

Blaspheming
whence.

If

Cap. 5.
A lesson
for young
men.

Sin is un-
reasonable
so much
the more,
as without
reason, it
pretends
reasons.

Psalme. 50.

If those also of the younger sort would aske of themselves, *Why God should not have the flower and marrow of their age? and why they should give their strength to the devill?* It might a little take them off from the devills service. But sinne is a worke of darkenesse, and therefore shuns not onely the light of grace, but even the light of reason. Yet sinne seldom wants a seeming reason, *Men will not go to hell without a shew of reason.* But such bee sophisticall fallacies, not reasons; and therefore sinners are said to play the sophisters with themselves: *Satan could not deceive us, unlesse we deceived our selves first, and are willingly deceived:* wilfull sinners are blinde, because they put out the light of reason; and so thinke God (like themselves) blinde too; and therefore they are deservedly termed mad men and fooles; for, did they but make use of that spark of reason, it would teach them to reason thus; *I cannot give an account of my wayes to my selfe: what account shall I, or can I give then, to the Iudge of all fleshere it be long?*

And

Cap. 5.

And as it is a ground of repentance, instopping our course to aske *what have I done?* So likewise of faith and new obedience, to aske *what shall I doe for the time to come?* and then upon setting the soule in way of thanks, will be ready to aske of it selfe, *What shall I returne to the Lord?* &c. So that the soule by this dealing with it selfe, promoteth it selfe to all holy duties till it come to heaven.

The reason why wee are thus backward to the keeping of this court in our selves, is *selfe-love*: we love to flatter our owne affections, *but this selfe-love, is but selfe-hatred in the end*; (as the Wiseman sayes) *he that regards not this part of wisdom, hates his owne soule, and shall eat the fruits of his owne wayes.*

2. As likewise it issues from an irksomenesse of labour, which makes us rather willing to seeme base and vile to our selves and others, than to take paines with our owne hearts to bee better, as those that are weary of holding the reins, give them up unto the horse necke, and so are driven whither the

rage

Reas. 1.
Why wee
are so
backward
to keepe
court in
our selves.

2.
Irksome-
nesse of
labour.

Cap 5.

1 Cor. 11.

31.

3.
Pride.*Mens mihi
pro regno.*

Jonah 4.

rage of the horse carieth them: *sparing a little trouble at first, doubles it in the end;* as hee who will not take the paines to cast up his books, his books will cast up him in the end. *It is a blessed trouble that brings sorrow and long peace:* This labour saves God a labour, for therefore hee judgeth us, because wee would not take paines with our selves before.

3. And *Pride* also, with a desire of liberty, makes men thinke it to bee a diminishing of greatnesse and freedome, either to bee curbed, or to curbe our selves: We love to be absolute, and independent; but this, as it brought ruine upon our nature in *Adam*; so it will upon our persons. Men (as *Luther* was wont to say) are borne with a Pope in their belly; they are loath to give an account, although it bee to themselves, their wills are in stead of a kingdome to them.

Let us therefore (when any lawlesse passions begin to stir) deale with our soules as God did with *Jonah*; *Dost thou well to be angry? to fret thus?* This will be a meanes to make us quiet. For, alas, what

what weake reasons have wee often of strong motions; such a man gave mee no respect, such another lookt more kindly upon another man than upon mee, &c. You have some of *Hamans* spirit, that for a little neglect, would ruine a whole Nation. Passion presents men that are innocent as guilty to us, and because wee will not seeme to bee mad without reason, *Pride* commands the wit to justifie anger, and so one Passion maintaines and feeds another.

Neither is it sufficient to *cite the soule before it selfe*; but, it must bee pressed to give an account, as wee see here, *David* doubles, and trebles the expostulation; as oft as any distemper did arise, so oft did he labour to keepe it downe. If passions grow too insolent, *Elies* mildnesse will doe no good. It would prevent much trouble in this kinde, to subdue betimes (in our selves and others) the first beginnings of any unruly passions and affections; which (if they be not well tutored and disciplined at the first) prove as headstrong, unruly, and ill nurtured children, who (being not cha-

F

stened

Cap. 1.

Ester 3.

Facit ira
nocentes.

Obfer. 2

1 Sam. 1.
24.

Cap. 5.

Pro. 29. 15

stened in time) take such a head, that it is (oft) above the power of Parents to bring them in order. A childe set at liberty (saith *Solomon*) breeds shame (at length) to his parents. *Adonizeths* example shewes this. The like may bee said of the affections set at liberty; It is dangerous to redeeme a little quiet by yeelding to our affections, which is never safely gotten but by mortification of them.

Those that are in great place, are most in danger, by yeelding to themselves, to lose themselves; for they are so taken up with the person for a time put upon them, that they, both in look, and speech, and cariage, often shew that they forget both their naturall condition as men, and much more their supernaturall as Christians; and therefore are scarce counsellable by others or themselves, in those things that concerneth their severed condition that concerneth another world. Whereas it were most wisdom so to think of their place they beare, whereby they are called *gods*, as not to forget they must lay their

Pl. 82. 6, 7.

their person aside, and *diz like men*: *David* himselfe that in his afflicted condition could advise with himselfe, and checke himselfe; yet in his free and flourishing estate neglected the counsell of his friends. *Agur* was in jealousie of a full condition, and lest in stead of saying, What have I done? why am I thus cast downe? &c. hee should say, *Who is the Lord?*

Cap. 7.
2 Sam. 14. 4

Prov. 30. 9

Meaner men in their lesser spheare, often shew what their spirits would be; if their compasse were enlarged.

It is a great fault in breeding youth, for feare of taking downe of their spirits, not to take downe their pride, and get victory of their affections; wherens a proud unbroken heart raiseth us more trouble often than all the world beside. Of all troubles, the trouble of a proud heart is the greatest: It was a great trouble to *Haman* to leade *Mordecaies* horse, which another man would not have thought so; the moving of a straw is troublesome to proud flesh. And therefore it is good to *beare the yoke from our youth*; It is better to be taken downe in

Ester 6. 1.

Lam. 3. 27.

Cap. 5.

youth, then to bee broken in pieces by great crosses in age. First or last, self-deniall and victory over our selves is absolutely necessary; otherwise *faith* which is a grace that requireth self-deniall, will never be brought into the soule, and beare rule there.

Quest.

But, *what if pressing upon our soules will not help?*

Answ.

Then speake to God, to Jesus Christ by prayer, that as he rebuked the winds and the waves, and went upon the Sea, so he would walke upon our soules, and command a calme there. It is no lesse power to settle a peace in the soule, than to command the seas to bee quiet. It is Gods prerogative to rule in the heart, as likewise to give it up to it selfe, which (next to hell) is the greatest judgement, which should draw us to the greater reverence and feare of displeasing God. It was no ill wish of him, that desired God, to free him from an ill man, himselfe.

Domine, libera me a malo homine meipso.

CHAP.

CAP. VI.

Other Observations of the same nature.

Moreover wee see that a godly man can cast a restraint upon himselfe, as David here staies himselfe in falling. There is a principle of grace, that stops the heart, and puls in the reines againe when the affections are loose. A carnall man, when he begins to be cast downe, sinkes lower and lower, untill he sinkes into despaire, as leade sinkes into the bottome of the sea. *They sunke, they sunke, like lead in the mighty waters.* A carnall man sinkes as a heavy body to the center of the earth, and stayes not, if it bee not stopped: There is nothing in him to stay him in falling, as wee see in *Achitophel* and *Saul*: who (wanting a support) found no other stay, but the swords point. And the greater their parts and places are, the more they intangle themselves; and no wonder, for they are to encounter with God and his deputy *Conscience*, who is

Obser. 3

Exod. 15. 5

2 Sam. 17. 23.

Cap. 6.

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. When *Cain* was cast out of his fathers house, his heart and countenance was alwaies cast downe; for he had nothing in him to lift it upwards. But a godly man, though hee may give a little way to passion; yet (as *David*) he recovers himselfe. Therefore as we would have any good evidence, that we have a better spirit in us than our owne, greater than the flesh or the world, Let us (in all troubles wee meet with) gather up our selves, that the streame of our owne affections carry us not away too far.

There is
an art of
bearing
troubles.

There is an art or skill of bearing troubles, (if wee could learne it) without overmuch troubling of our selves; As in bearing of a burthen there is a way so to poizeit, that it weigheth not over heavy: If it hangs all on one side, it poizes the body downe. The greater part of our troubles wee pull upon our selves, by not parting our care so, as to take upon us onely the care of duty, and leave the rest to God; and by mingling our passions with our crosses; and (like a foolish patient) chewing
ing

Cap. 6.

ing the pills which we should swallow downe. Wee dwell too much upon the griefe, when wee should remove the soule higher. Wee are nearest neighbours unto our selves; when wee suffer griefe (like a canker) to eate into the soule, and (like a fire in the bones) to consume the marrow, and drinke up the spirits, wee are accessory to the wrong done both to our bodies and soules; we wast our owne candle, and put out our light.

We see here againe, that a godly man can make good use of Privacy. When he is forced to be alone, he can talke with his GOD and himselfe; one reason whereof is, that his heart is a treasury and storehouse of Divine truths, whence he can speake to himselfe, by way of checke, or encouragement of himselfe: he hath a spirit over his owne spirit, to teach him to make use of that store hee hath laid up in his heart, the spirit is never neerer him then when by way of witnessse to his spirit hee is thus comforted; wherein the childe of God differs from another man, who cannot

Obser. 4

This cause
why wicked men
cannot endure soli-
tari. esse.

Cap. 6.

As Charls
the ninth
after the
Massacre
in France.
Thuanus, li.
57. Somnū
post casum
Sancti bartho-
lomeum no-
cturni hor-
rores ple-
rumque in-
terrumpe-
bant et rur-
sus adhibitis
symphoniis
expergesa-
cto concilia-
bant.

endure solitarinesse, because his heart
is empty; hee was a stranger to God
before, and God is a stranger to him
now; So that he cannot goe to God as
a friend; And for his conscience, that is
ready to speake to him, that which hee
is loath to heare; and therefore, hee
counts himselfe a vorment to himselfe,
especially in privacy.

We reade of great Princes who after
some bloody designs, were as terrible
to themselves as they were formerly to
others, and therefore could never en-
dure to bee awaked in the night, with-
out Musique, or some like diversion.
It may be, wee may be cast into such a
condition, (where we have none in the
world to comfort us) as in contagious
sicknesse, when none may come neare
us, we may be in such an estate where-
in no friend will owne us. And there-
fore let us labour now to bee acquain-
ted with God and our owne hearts; and
acquaint our hearts with the comforts
of the Holy Ghost; then, though we
have not so much as a booke to looke
on, or a friend to talke with, yet wee
may

may looke with comfort into the book
of our owne heart, and reade what God
hath written there by the finger of his
Spirit: all bookes are written to amend
this one booke of our heart and consci-
ence; by this meanes wee shall never
want a Divine to comfort us, a Physi-
cian to cure us, a counsellor to direct us,
a Musician to cheare us, a Controller
to checke us, because (by helpe of the
Word and Spirit) wee can be all these
to our selves.

Another thing we see here, that God
hath made every man a Governour o-
ver himselfe. The poore man that hath
none to governe, yet may hee bee a
King in himselfe. It is the naturall am-
bition of mans heart to desire govern-
ment, as we see in the *Bramble*; Well
then, let us make use of this dispositi-
on, to rule our selves. *Abraham* had high
thoughts; O, If I were a King, I would
doe so and so. So our hearts are ready
to promise, If I were as such and such a
man, in such and such a place, I would
doe this and that.

But how dost thou manage thine
owne

Cap. 6.

*Ideo scri-
buntur om-
nes libri ut
emendetur
homo.*

abser. 5

2. 13. 10

Judges 9.

*-220. 11A
-220. 11B
-220. 11C
-220. 11D*

Cap. 6.

Mat. 23. 21

Pro. 16. 32

Obfer. 6

All outward troubles are for to help the soule.

owne affections? how dost thou rule in thine owne house? in thy selfe? doe not passions get the upper hand, and keepe reason under foot? When wee have learned to rule oyer our owne spirits well, then we may bee fit to rule over others. *He that is faithfull in a little, shall bee set over more. Hee that can governe himselfe* (in the Wise mans judgement) *is better then hee that can governe a City.* Hee that cannot, *is like a City without a wall*, where those that are in may goe out, and the enemies without, may come in at their pleasure. So where there is not a government set up, there sinne breaks out, and Satan breaks in without controule.

See againe, the excellency of the soule, that can reflect upon it selfe, and judge of whatsoever comes from it: A godly mans care and trouble is especially about his soule, as David here looks principally to that, because all outward troubles are for to helpe that, when God touches our bodies, our estates, or our friends, hee aimes at the soule in all. God will never remove his hand,

Cap. 6.
Pſalm. 32.

hand, till ſomething bee wrought upon the ſoule, as *Dauids* myſtury was at the drought in Summer, ſo that hee roared, and carried himſelfe unſeemely (for ſo great and holy a man) till his heart was ſubdued to deale without all guile with God in confeſſing his ſinne, and then God forgave him the iniquity thereof, and healed his body to. In ſickneſſe, or in any other trouble, It is beſt the Divine ſhould bee before the Phyſician: and that wee begin where God begins. In great fires men looke firſt to their Jewels, and then to their lumber; ſo our ſoule is our beſt Jewell. A carnall worldly man, is called (and well called) a fleſhly man, becauſe his very ſoule is fleſh, and there is nothing but the world in him. And therefore, when all is not well within, he cries out, My Body is troubled, my ſtate is broken, my friends faile mee, &c. but all this while, there is no care for the poore ſoule to ſettle a peace in that.

The poſſeſſion of the ſoule is the richeſt poſſeſſion, no jewell ſo precious; the account for our owne ſoules,

and

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and the soules of others, is the greatest account, and therefore the care of soules should bee the greatest care. What an indignity is it that wee should forget such soules, to satisfie our lusts & to have our wills? to bee vexed with any, who by their judgement, example, or authority stop as wee suppose our courses? Is it not the greatest plot of the world; First, to have their lusts satisfied: Secondly, to remove either by fraud or violence whatsoever standeth in their way: And thirdly, to put colours and pretences upon this to delude the world and themselves, employing all their carnall wit and worldly strength for their carnall aimes, and fighting for that which fights against their owne soules? For what will bee the issue of this but certaine destruction?

Of this minde are not onely the dregs of people, but many of the more refined sort, who desire to be eminent in the world; And to have their owne desires herein, give up the liberty of their owne judgements and consciences,

ees, to the desires and lusts of others; *to bee above others they will be beneath themselves*; having those mens persons in admiration for hope of advantage, whom otherwise they despise, and so substituting in their spirits, man in the place of God, lose heaven for earth, and bury that divine sparke (their soules) capable of the Divine Nature, and fitter to bee a sanctuary and temple for God to dwell in, than by clozing with baser things to become base it selfe. We need not wonder that others seeme base to carnall men, who are base both in and to themselves. It is no wonder they should bee cruell to the soules of others, who are cruell to their owne soules; that they should neglect and starve others, that give away their owne soules in a manner for nothing. Alas, upon what poore termes doe they hazard that, the nature and worth whereof is beyond mans reach to comprehend. Many are so carelesse in this kinde, that if they were thoroughly perswaded that they had soules that should live for ever, (either in blisse or torment)

Cap. 6.

torment) wee might the more easily work upon them. But as they live by sense, as beasts, so they have no more thoughts of future times than beasts, except at such times as conscience is awaked by some suddaine judgement, whereby Gods wrath is revealed from heaven against them. But happy were it for them, if they might die like beasts, whose misery dies with them.

To such an estate hath sinne brought the soule, that it willingly drowneth it selfe in the senses, and becomes in some sort incarnate with the flesh.

Wee should therefore set our selves to have most care of that, which God cares most for: which he breathed into us at first, set his owne image upon, gave so great a price for, and values above all the world besides. Shall all our study bee to satisfie the desires of the flesh, and negle& this?

Is it not a vanity to preferre the casket before the jewell, the shell before the pearle, the gilded posheard before the treasure? and is it not much more vanity, to preferre the outward condition

Cap. 4.

condition before the inward? The soule is that which Satan and his hath most spite at, for in troubling our bodies or estates, he aimes at the vexation of our soules. As in *Iob*, his aime was to abuse that power God had given him over His children, body and goods, to make him out of a disquieted spirit blaspheme God. It is an ill method to beginne our care in other things, and neglect the soule, as *Abithophel*, who set his house in order, when hee should have set his soule in order first. Wisedome begins at the right end. If all bee well at home, it comforts a man, though he meets with troubles abroad. Oh (saith he) I shall have rest at home, I have a loving wife and dutifull children; so whatsoever we meet withall abroad, if the soule be quiet, thither wee can retire with comfort. See that all be well within, and then all troubles from without cannot much annoy us.

Grace will teach us to reason thus, God hath given mine enemies power over my liberty and condition, but shall

Iob 1.

2 Sam. 17.

23.
We should
set the soul
first in
order.

Cap. 6.

shall they have power and liberty over my spirit? It is that which Satan and they most seek for: but never yeeld, Oh my soule. And thus a godly man will become more than a conqueror; when in appearance hee is conquered, the cause prevailes, his spirit prevailes and is undaunted. A Christian is not subdued till his spirit be subdued. Thus *Iob* prevailed over Satan and all his troubles at length. This tormenteth proud persons to see godly men enjoy a calme and resolute frame of minde in the midst of troubles; when their enemies are more troubled in troubling them, than they are in being troubled by them.

Obfer. 7.

Wee see likewise here, *how to frame our complaints*: *David* complaines not of God, nor of his troubles, nor of others, but of his owne soule; he complaines of himselfe, to himselfe. As if hee should say, *Though all things else be out of order yet O my soule thou shouldst not trouble mee too: thou shouldst not betray thy selfe unto troubles, but rule over them.* A godly man complaines to God, yet

yet not of God, but of himselfe; a carnall man is ready to iustifie himselfe, and complaine of God. He complaines not to God, but of God (at the least) in secret murmuring: hee complaines of others that are but Gods vialls; he complaines of the grievance that lies upon him, but never regards what is amisse in himselfe within: Openly hee cries out upon fortune, yet secretly he striketh at G O D, under that Idoll of fortune, by whose guidance all things come to passe; whilst he quarrells with that which is nothing, hee wounds him that is the cause of all things: like a gouty man that complaines of his shooe, and of his bed; or an aguish man, of his drinke, when the cause is from within. So men are disquieted with others, when they should rather bee disquieted and angry with their owne hearts.

We condemne *Isaiah* for contending with God, and iustifying his unjust anger, but yet the same risings are in men naturally, if shame would suffer them to give vent to their secret discontent;

G

their

Cap. 6.

their heart speakes what *Jonas* tongue spake. Oh, but here we should lay our hand upon our mouth, and adore God, and command silence to our soules.

Iam. 1. 13.

No man is hurt but by himselfe first; Wee are drawne to evill, and allured from a true good to a false by our owne lusts, *God tempts no man*. Satan hath no power over us further than wee willingly lie open to him; Satan workes upon our affections, and then our affections worke upon our will. Hee doth not worke immediately upon the will; wee may thanke our selves in willingly yeelding to our owne passions, for all that ill *Satan* or his instruments drawes us unto; *Saul* was not vexed with an *evill spirit*, till he gave way to his owne *evill spirit of envy* first. The devill entered not into *Judas*, untill his covetous heart made way for him. The Apostle strengthneth his conceit against rash and lasting anger from hence, that by this wee give way to the devill. It is a dangerous thing to passe from Gods government, and come under Satans.

1 Sam. 16.

Mat. 27. 3.

Iphes. 4.

Satan mingleth himselfe with our
owne

Cap. 6.

owne passions, therefore wee should blame our selves first, bee ashamed of our selves most, and judge our selves most severely. But selfe-love teacheth us a contrary method; to translate all upon others; it robs us of a right judgement of our selves. Though we desire to know all diseases of the body by their proper names, yet wee will conceive of sinfull passions of the soule under milder termes; as *lust* under *love*, *rage* under *just anger*, *murdering* under *just displeasure*, &c. thus whilest wee flatter our griefs, what hope of cure is? Thus sinne hath not onely made all the creatures enemies to us, but our selves the greatest enemies to our selves; and therefore wee should begin our complaints against our selves, and discusse our selves throughly; how else shall we judge truely of other things without us, above us, or beneath us? The Sunne when it rises enlightens first the nearest places, and then the more remote; So where true light is set up, it discovers what is amisse within first.

Hence also we see, that *we in all dis-*

Obser. 8

G 2

courage.

Cap. 6.

couragements a godly man bath most trouble with his owne heart, so hee knowes how to carry himselfe therein, as David doth here.

I.

For the better clearing of this, wee must know there bee divers kindes and degrees of conflicts in the soule of man, whilst it is united to the body.

First, betweene one corrupt *Passion* and another. as betweene *Covetousnesse* and *Pride*; *Pride* calls for expence, *Covetousnesse* for restraint; oft *Passions* fight not onely against God and reason, to which they owe a homage, but one against another; Sinne fights against sinne, and a lesser sinne is oftentimes overcome by a greater. The soule in this case, is like the Sea tossed with contrary windes; and like a kingdome divided, wherein the subjects fight both against their Prince, and one against another.

2.

Secondly, there is a naturall conflict in the *Affections*, whereby *Nature* seeks to preserve it selfe, as betwixt anger and feare; *Anger* calls for revenge, *Fear* of the law bindes the soule to be quiet.

Wee

Wee see in the creatures, *fear* makes them abstaine from that which their appetites carry them unto. A *Wolfe* comes to a *flocke* with an eagernesse to prey upon it, but seeing the *Shepherd* standing in defence of his *sheepe*, returns and doth no harme, and yet for all this as hee came a *wolfe*, so hee returns a *wolfe*.

Cap. 6.

A naturall man may oppose some sin from an obstinate resolution against it, not from any love to God, or hatred of sin, as *sin*, but because hee conceives it a brave thing to have his will. As one hard weapon may strike at another, as a stone wall may beate backe an arrow; but this opposition is not from a contrariety of nature, as is betwixt fire and water.

Thirdly, there is a conflict of a higher nature, as betweene some *sins* and the light of *reason* helped by a naturall conscience. The *Heathen* could reason from the dignity of the soule, to count it a base thing to prostitute themselves to beastly lusts, so as it were degrading and unmanning themselves. Naturall

3.

*Major sum,
& ad ma-
jora natu-
ra, quia ut cor-
poris mei
sum manci-
pium. Sen.*

Cap. 9.

men desirous, to maintaine a great opinion of themselves, and to awe the inferior sort by gravity of deportment in carriage, will abstaine from that, which otherwise their hearts carry them unto, lest yeelding should render them despised, by daying themselves too much open, as because passion discovers a foole as hee is, and makes a wise man thought meaner then hee is; therefore a prudent man will conceale his passion. Reason refined and raised by education, example, and custome, doth breake in some degree the force of naturall corruption, and brings into the soule, as it were, another nature, and yet no true change, as wee see in such as have beene inned to good courses, they feelee conscience checking them upon the first discontinuance and alteration of their former good wayes, but this is usually from a former impression of their breeding, as the boate moves some little time upon the water by vertue of the former stroake, yet at length we see corruption prevailing over education, as in Iudas, who

was

was awed by the reverent respect hee bare to his uncle *Iehoiada*; he was good all his uncles dayes: And in *Nero*, in whom the goodnesse of his education prevailed over the fiercenesse of his nature, for the first five yeeres.

Fourthly, but in the Church, where there shineth a light above nature, as there is a discovery of more finnes, and some strength, with the light, to performe more duty; So there is a further conflict than in a man that hath no better than nature in him. By a discovery of the excellent things of the Gospel, there may be some kinde of joy stirred up, and some degree of obedience: whence there may be some degree of resistance against the finnes of the Gospel, as obstinate unbelief, desperation, prophanenesse, &c. A man in the Church may doe more than another out of the Church, by reason of the enlargement of his knowledge; whereupon such cannot sinne at so easie a rate as others that know lesse, and (therefore) meet with lesse opposition from conscience.

Cap. 6.

2 Kings
12.2.

4.

G 4

Fifthly,

Cap. 6.

5.

Fifly, there is yet a further degree of conflict betwixt the sanctified powers of the soule, and the flesh, not onely as it is seated in the baser parts, but even in the best faculties of the soule, and as it mingles it selfe with every gracious performance; (as in *David*) There is not onely a conflict betwixt sinne and conscience, inlightned by a *common worke* of the *Spirit*; but betweene the commanding powers of the soule *sanctified*, and it selfe *unsanctified*, between reasons of the *flesh*, and reasons of the *spirit*, betweene *faith* and *distrust*, betweene the true light of knowledge, and false light. For it is no question but the flesh would play its part in *David*, and muster up all the strength of reason it had. And usually *flesh*, as it is more ancient than the *spirit*, (wee being first naturall then spirituall) so it will put it selfe first forward in devising shifts, as *Esau* comes out of the wombe first before *Jacob*, yet hereby the *spirit* is stirred up to a present examination and resistance, and in resisting (as wee see here) at length the godly gets the victory.

victory. As in the conflict betweene the higher parts of the soule with the lower, it clearely appeares, that the soule doth not rise out of the temper of the body, but is a more noble substance, commanding the body by reasons fetched from its owne worth; so in this spirituall conflict, it appeares there is something better than the soule it selfe, that hath superiority over it.

CAP. VII.

Difference between good men and others in conflicts with sinne.

BUT how doth it appeare that this combat in *David* was a spirituall combat?

First, a naturall conscience is troubled for sins against the light of Nature onely, but *David* for inward and secret corruptions, as discouragement and disquietnesse arising from faint trusting in God.

Dauids conflict was not onely with the sensuall lower part of his soule, which

Quest.

I.
Ans.

Cap. 7.

which is carried to ease and quiet, and love of present things, but hee was troubled with a mixtury in his understanding, betweene *faith* and *distrust*; and therefore hee was forced to rouse up his soule so oft to *trust* in *God*, which shewes that carnall reason did sollicite him to discontent, and had many colourable reasons for it.

2.

Secondly, a man indued with *common* grace, is rather a patient than an agent in conflicts; the *light* troubles him against his will, as discovering and reprovving him, and hindring his sinfull contentments; his heart is more byassed another way if the *light* would let him; but a godly man labours to helpe the *light*, and to worke his heart to an opposition against sinne; he is an agent as well as a patient. As *David* here doth not suffer disquieting, but is *disquieted* with himselfe for being so. A godly man is an *agent* in opposing his corruption, and a *patient* in induring of it: whereas a naturall man is a secret *agent* in and for his corruptions, and a *patient* in regard of any helpe against them;

them; A good man suffers evill and doth good, a naturall man suffers good and doth evill.

3.

Thirdly, a conscience guided by *common* light, withstands distempers most by outward meanes, but *David* here fetcheth helpe from the Spirit of *God* in him, and from trust in *God*. Nature workes from within, so doth the new nature; *David* is not onely something *disquieted*, and something troubled for being disquieted, but sets himselfe thoroughly against his distempers; hee complaines, and expostulates, hee censures, and chargeth his soule. The other, if hee doth any thing at all, yet it is faintly; hee seeks out his corruption as a coward doth his enemy, loth to finde him, and more loth to encounter with him.

4.

Fourthly, *David* withstands sinne constantly, and gets ground. Wee see here, he gives not over at the first, but presseth againe and againe. Nature works constantly, so doth the new nature. The conflict in the other is something forced, as taking part with the worser

5.

Cap. 7.

worser side in himselfe, good things have a weake, or rather no party in him, bad things a strong; and therefore hee soone gives over in this holy quartell.

5.

Fifthly, *David* is not discouraged by his foiles, but sets himselfe afresh against his corruptions, with confidence to bring them under. Whereas he that hath but a common worke of the Spirit, after some foiles, lets his enemy prevaile more and more, and so despaires of victory, and thinks it better to sit still, than to rise and take a new fall; by which meanes his latter end is worse then his beginning; for *beginning in the spirit, he ends in the flesh*. A godly man, although upon some foile, hee may for a time bee discouraged, yet by holy indignation against sinne, hee renues his force, and sets afresh upon his corruptions, and gathers more strength by his falls, and groweth into more acquaintance with his owne heart, and Satans malice, and Gods strange waies in bringing light out of darknesse.

6.

Sixtly, An ordinary Christian may be disquieted for being disquieted, as

David

Cap. 7.

David was, but then it is onely as disquiet hath vexation in it; but *David* here striveth against the unquietnesse of his spirit, not only as it brought vexation with it, but as it hindred communion with his God.

In sinne there is not onely a guilt binding over the soule to Gods judgement, and thereupon filling the soule with inward feares and terrors; but in sinne likewise there is, 1. a contrariety to Gods holy Nature; and, 2. a contrariety to the Divine Nature and image stamped upon our selves; 3. a weakning and disabling of the soule from good; and, 4. a hindring of our former communion with God, sinne being in its nature a leaving of God the fountaine of all strength and comfort, and cleaving to the creature; hereupon the soule having tasted the sweetnesse of God before, is now grieved, and this grieve is not onely for the guilt and trouble that sinne drawes after it, but from an inward Antipathy and contrariety betwixt the sanctified soule and sinne. It hates sinne as sinne, as the onely

Evils of sinne.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Cap. 7.

onely bane and poyson of renewed nature, and the onely thing that breeds strangeness betwixt God and the soule. And this hatred, is not so much from discourse and strength of reason, as from nature it selfe rising presently against its enemy; The *Lambe* presently shuns the *Wolfe* from a contrariety; Antipathies wait not for any strong reason, but are exercised upon the first presence of a contrary object.

7.

Seventhly, hereupon ariseth the last difference; that because the soule hateth sinne as sinne, therefore it opposeth it universally and eternally, in all the powers of the soule, and in all actions inward and outward issuing from those powers, *David regarded no iniquity in his heart, but hated every evill way.* The desires of his soule were, *that it might be so directed, that he might keep Gods law.* And if there had beene no binding law, yet there was such a sweet sympathy and agreement betwixt his soule and Gods truth, that he *delighted in it* above all naturall sweetness; Hence it is that Saint *John* saith, *He that is borne*

Psa. 66. 18

Psal. 119. 5

1 I. h. 3. 9.

of

Cap. 7.

of God cannot sinne, that is, so far forth as he is borne of God; his new nature will not suffer him, he cannot lie, he cannot deceive, he cannot be earthly minded, hee cannot but love and delight in the persons and things that are good. There is not onely a light in the understanding, but a new life in the will, and all other faculties of a godly man; what good his knowledge discovereth, that his will makes choice of, and his heart loveth; What ill his understanding discovers, that his will hateth and abstains from. But in a man not thoroughly converted, the will and affections are bent otherwise, hee loves not the good hee doth, nor hates the evill hee doth not.

Therefore let us make a narrow search into our soules upon what grounds wee oppose sinne, and fight Gods battells. A common Christian is not cast downe, because hee is disquieted in Gods service, or for his inward failings, that he cannot serve God with that liberty & freedome he desires, &c. But a godly man is troubled for his distempers,

Vse.

Cap. 7.

stempers, because they hinder the comfortable intercourse betwixt God and his soule, and that spirituall composednesse, and Sabbath of spirit which hee enjoyed before, and desires to enjoy againe. Hee is troubled that the waters of his soule are troubled so; that the image of Christ shines not in him as it did before. It grieves him to finde an abatement in affection, in love to God, a distraction or coldnesse in performing duties, any doubting of Gods favour, any discouragement from dutie, &c. A godly mans comforts and grievances are hid from the world; naturall men are strangers to them. Let this be a rule of discerning our estates, how wee stand affected to the distempers of our hearts; If wee finde them troublesome, it is a ground of comfort unto us that our *soules* are ruled by a *higher Spirit*; and that there is a principle of that life in us, which cannot brooke the most secret corruption, but rather casts it out by a holy complaint, as strength of nature doth poyson, which seekes its destruction. And

let

let us be in love with that work of grace in us, which makes us out of love with the least stirrings that hinder our best condition.

Cap. 1.

See againe, *We may be sinfully disquieted for that which is not a sinne to bee disquieted for.* David had sinned if he had not beene somewhat troubled for the banishment from Gods house, and the blasphemie of the enemies of the Church; But yet (wee see) hee stops himselfe, and sharply takes up his soule for being disquieted: Hee did well in being disquieted, and in checking himselfe for the same; there were good grounds for both: He had wanted spirituall life if he had not beene disquieted. Hee abated the vigour and livenesse of his life, by being over-much disquieted.

Obser. 9

H CAP.

Cap. 8.

CAP. V^{III}.

Of unfitting dejection: and when it is excessive. And what is the right temper of the soule herein.

Quest.

Then, how shall we know when a man is cast downe and disquieted, otherwise then is besitting?

Answ.

There is a three-fold miscarriage of inward trouble.

1.

1. When the soule is troubled for that it should not be vexed for, as Ahab, when hee was crost in his will for Naboths vineyard.

2.

2. In the ground, as when we grieve for that which is good, and for that which we should grieve for; but it is with too much reflecting upon our own particular.

As in the troubles of the *State* or *Church*, wee ought to be affected; but not because these troubles hinder any liberties of the flesh, and restraine pride of life, but from higher respects: As
that

Cap. 8.

that by these troubles God is dishonoured, the publike exercises of Religion hindered, and the gathering of soules thereby stopped: As, the *States* and *Common-wealths* which should be harbours of the Church, are disturbed; as lawlesse courses and persons prevaile; as Religion and Justice is triumphed over, and trodden under. Men usually are grieved for publique miseries from a spirit of selfe-love only, because their owne private is imbarqued in the publike. There is a depth of deceit of the heart in this matter.

3. So for the measure, when wee trouble our selves (though not without cause) yet without bounds.

The spirit of man is like unto moist elements, as ayre and water, which have no bounds of their owne to containe them in, but those of the vessel that keepees them: water is spilt and lost without something to hold it; so it is with the spirit of man, unlesse it bee bounded with the Spirit of God. Put the case a man beedisturbed for sinne, (for which not to be disturbed is a sin)

Cap. 8.

yet wee may looke too much, and too long upon it, for the soule hath a double eye, one to looke to sinne, another to looke up to Gods mercy in Christ. Having two objects to looke on, wee may sinne in looking too much on the one, with neglect of the other.

Quest.

Seeing then, disquieting and dejection for sinne is necessary, how shall wee know when it exceeds measure?

Answ.

1.

First, when it hinders us from holy duties, or in the performance of them, by distraction or otherwise; whereas they are given to carry us to that which is pleasing to GOD, and good to our selves.

Luk. 23. 42

Griefe is ill when it taketh off the soule from minding that it should, and so indisposeth us to the duties of our callings. Christ upon the Crosse was grieved to the utmost, yet it did not take away his care for his mother; so the good thiefe in the midst of his pangs laboured to gaine his fellow, and to save his owne soule, and to glorifie Christ. If this be so in griefe of body
which

which taketh away the free use of reason, and exercise of grace more than any other griefe, then much more in griefe from more remote causes; for in extremity of body the sicknesse may bee such, as all that wee can performe to God is a quiet submission, and a desire to bee carried unto Christ by the prayers of others; we should so minde our griefe as not to forget Gods mercy, or our owne duty.

Secondly, when wee forget the grounds of comfort, & suffer our minde to runne onely upon the present grievance: it is a sinne to dwell on sinne, and turmoile our thoughts about it, when we are called to thankfulness. A Physician in good discretion forbids a diet at some times to prevent the nourishment of some disease, which another time hee gives way unto. So wee may and ought to abstaine from too much feeding our thoughts upon our corruptions in case of discouragement, which at other times is very necessary. It should bee our wisdom in such cases to change the object, and labour to take

2.

Cap. 8.

Ps. 118. 24.

1 Thes. 5.
16.

off our mindes, and give them to that which calls more for them; Griefe oft presseth unseasonably upon us, when there is cause of joy, and when we are called to joy; as *Isab* justly found fault with *David* for grieving too much, when *G O D* had given him the victory, and rid him and the State of a traiterous sonne. *G O D* hath made some dayes for joy, and joy is the proper worke of those dayes. *This is the day which the Lord hath made.* Some in a sicke distemper, desire that which increaseth their sicknesse; so some that are deeply cast downe, desire a waking ministry, and what ever may cast them downe more; whereas they should meditate upon comforts, and get some sweet assurance of Gods love. Joy is the constant temper which the soule should be in, *Rejoyce evermore,* (saith the Apostle.) If a sinke be stirred, we stir it not more, but goe into a sweeter roome. So we should thinke of that which is comfortable, and of such truths as may raise up the soule, and sweeten the spirit.

Thirdly,

Cap. 8.

3.

Thirdly, Griefe is too much, when it inclines the soule to any inconvenient courses : (for if it bee not lookt to, it is an ill counseller) when either it hurts the health of our bodies, or drawes the soule (for to ease it selfe) to some unlawfull liberty. When griefe keepes such a noise in the soule, that it will not heare what the messengers of God, or the still voice of the Spirit saith, as in combustions, loud cries are scarce heard : so in such cases the soule will neither heare it selfe, nor others. The fruit of this over-much trouble of spirit, is increase of trouble.

3. Another question may bee, *What that sweet and holy temper is, the soule should bee in, that it may neither be faulty in the defect, nor too much abound in grief and sorrow?*

Quest.

1. The soule must bee raised to a right griefe.

Ans.

2. The griefe that is raised, though it bee right, yet it must bee bounded. Before wee speake of raising griefe in

Cap. 8.

the godly, wee must know there are some who are altogether strangers to any kinde of spirituall grieve, or trouble at all; such must consider, that the way to prevent everlasting trouble, is to desire to bee troubled with a preventing trouble. Let those that are not in the way of grace thinke with themselves what cause they have, not to take a minutes rest while they are in that estate. For a man to bee in debt both body and soule, subject every minute to be arrested and carried prisoner to Hell, and not so bee moved: For a man to have the wrath of God ready to bee powred out upon him, and Hell gape for him, nay to carry a hell about him in conscience (if it were awake) and to have all his comfort here hanging upon a weake thread of this life ready to bee cut and broken off every moment, and to bee cursed in all those blessings that hee enjoyes; and yet not to bee disquieted, but continually treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, by running deeper into Gods books: for a man to bee thus, and not
to

to bee disquieted, is but the Devills peace, whilst the strong man holds possession: *A burning Agne is more hopefull than a Lethargy*: The best service that can be done to such men, is to startle and rouse them, and so with violence to pull them out of the fire, (as *Jude speakes*) or else they will another day curse that cruell mercy that lets them alone now. In all their jollity in this world, they are but as a Booke fairely bound, which when it is opened is full of nothing but Tragodies. So when the booke of their consciences shall bee once opened, there is nothing to bee read but lamentations and woer. Such men were in a way of hope, if they had but so much apprehension of their estates, as to ask themselves, *What have I done?* If this be true that there are such fearefull things prepared for sinners, *why am I not cast downe?* Why am I no more troubled and discouraged for my wicked courses? Despaire to such is the beginning of comfort; and trouble the beginning of peace. A storme is the way to a calme, and hell

the

Cap. 8.

I.
Right
grief, how
raised.

the way to heaven.

But for raising of a right grief in the soule of a holy man, *look what is the state of the soule in it selfe, in what termes it is with God*; whether there bee any sinne hanging on the fyle unrepented of. If all bee not well within us, then heres place for inward trouble, whereby the soule may afflict it selfe.

Lev. 16. 29

God saw this griefe so needfull for his people, that hee appointed certaine dayes for afflicting them; because it is fit that sinne contrasted by joy should bee dissolved by griefe; and sinne is so deeply invested into the soule, that a separation betwixt the soule and it cannot be wrought without much griefe; when the soule hath smarted for sinne, it sets then the right price upon reconciliation with God in Christ, and it feelth what a bitter thing sinne is, and therefore it will bee afraid to bee too bold with it afterward; it likewise aweth the heart so, that it will not bee so loose towards God as it was before; and certainly that soule that hath felt the sweetnesse of keeping peace with God,

God, cannot but take deeply to heart, that there should bee any thing in us that should divide betwixt us and the fountaine of our comfort, that should stop the passage of our prayers, and the current of Gods favours both towards our selves and others; it is such an ill as is the cause of all other ills, and damps all our comforts.

2. We should look out of our selves also, considering whether for troubles at home and abroad, God calls not to mourning or troubling of our selves; griefe of compassion is as well required as griefe of contrition.

It is a dead member that is not sensible of the state of the body. *Jeremie* for feare hee should not weepe enough for the distressed estate of the Church, desired of God, *that his eyes might bee made a fountaine of teares.* A Christian, as hee must not bee proud flesh, so neither must he be dead flesh; none more truly sensible either of sinne or of misery (so farre as misery caries with it any signe of Gods displeasure) then a true Christian: which issues from the

life

Jerem. 9. 1.

Cap. 8.

*Si nil cura-
rem, nil ora-
rem.*

2.

Griefe to
be bound-
ded.

1.

When our
affections
are pliable

life of Grace, which (where it is in any measure) is lively, and therefore sensible: for God gives motion and senses for the preservation of life. As Gods bowels are tender towards us, so Gods people have tender bowels towards him, his cause, his people, and his Church. The fruit of this sensiblenesse, is earnest prayer to God. (As *Melancthon* said well) *If I cared for nothing, I would pray for nothing.*

2. Griefe being thus raised, must, as wee said before, bee bounded and guided. Now to a noile guide to griefe.

1. God hath framed the soule, and planted such affections in it, as may answer all his dealing towards his children; that when he enlargeth himselfe towards them, then the soule should enlarge it selfe to him againe; when he opens his hand wee ought to open our hearts; when hee shewes any token of displeasure, wee should grieve; when he troubles us, wee should trouble and grieve our selves. As God any way discovereth himselfe, so the soule should be in a futable pliability. Then the soule

soule is as it should be, when it is ready to meet God at every turn, to joy when he calls for it, to mourne when he calls for that, to labour to know Gods meaning in every thing.

Cap. 2.

Againe, God hath made the soule for a communion with himselfe, which communion is especially placed in the affections, which are the springs of all spirituall worship. Then the affections are well ordered, when wee are fit to have communion with God, to *love*, *joy*, *trust*, to *delight* in him above all things. The affections are the inward movings of the soule, which then move best when they move us to God, not from him. They are the feet of the soule, whereby wee walke with, and before God. When we have our affections at such command, that we can take them off from any thing in the world, at such times as wee are to have more neare communion with God in *hearing* or *prayer*, &c. As *Abraham* when he was to sacrifice, left whatsoever might hinder him at the *bottoms of the Mount*. When we let our affections so farre in-

2.
What fit to
have com-
munion
with God.

Gen. 22. 5.

to

Cap. 8.

to the things of the world, as we cannot take them off when we are to deale with God; it is a signe of spirituall intemperancy. It is said of the Israelites that they brought *Egypt* with them into the wilderness; so many bring the world in their hearts with them, when they come before God.

3.
When our
affections
are subor-
dinate.

But because our affections are never well ordered without judgement, as being to follow, not to leade; It is an evidence that the soule is in a fit temper, when there is such a harmony in it, as that wee judge of things as they are, and affect as we judge, and execute as wee affect. This harmony within breeds uniformity and constancy in our resolutions, so that there is (as it were) an even threed drawne through the whole course and tenour of our lives, when we are not off and on, up and downe. It argues an ill state of body when it is very hot, or very cold, or hot in one part, and cold in another; so unevennesse of spirit argues a distemper; a wise mans life is of one colour like it selfe. The soule bred from
heaven,

heaven, so far as it is heavenly minded, desires to bee (like heaven) above all stormes, uniforme, constant; not as things under the Sunne, which are alwayes in changes, constant onely in inconstancy. Affections are as it were the winde of the soule. and then the soule is carried as it should bee, when it is neither so becalmed that it moves not when it should, nor yet tossed with tempests to move disorderly. When it is so well balaced that it is neither lift up, nor cast downe too much, but keepeth a stedy course. Our affections must not rise to become unruly passions, for then as a river that overfloweth the bankes, they carry much slime and soile with them. Though affections bee the winde of the soule, yet unruly passions are the stormes of the soule, and will overturne all, if they be not suppressed. The best (as wee see in *David* here) if they doe not steare their hearts aright, are in danger of suddengusts. A Christian must neither be a dead sea, nor a raging sea.

Our affections are then in best temper.

Cap. 2.

When our
affections
become
graces.

per, when they become so many graces of the Spirit; as when *love* is turned to a love of God; *joy*, to a delight in the best things; *fear*, to a feare of offending him more than any creature; *sorrow*, to a sorrow for sinne, &c.

5.

When fit
to perform
duties.

They are likewise in good temper, when they move us to all duties of love and mercy towards others; when they are not shut, where they should bee open, nor open where they should bee shut.

In case of
Gods dishonour,
exceeding
affection is
no exccsse.

Yet there is one case wherein exceeding *affection* is not over exceeding; As in an extasie of zeale upon a sudden apprehension of Gods dishonour, and his cause trodden under foot. It is better in this case, rather scarce to bee our owne men, than to bee calme or quiet. It is said of *Christ* and *David*, that their hearts were eaten up with a holy zeale for Gods House. In such a case *Moses* unparalleld for *meeknesse*, was turned into an holy rage. The greatnesse of the provocation, the excellency of the object, and the weight of the occasion, beares out the soule, not onely without blame,

blame, but with great praise, in such seeming distempers. It is the glory of a Christian to be carried with full saile, and as it were with a spring-tide of affection. So long as the streame of affection runneth in the due channell, and if there be great occasions for great motions, then it is fit the affections should rise higher, as to *burne* with zeale, to be *sicke of love*, to be *more vile* for the Lord, as *David*; to be counted *out of our wits* with *Saint Paul* to further the cause of Christ and the good of soules.

Thus we may see the life of a poore Christian in this world, 1. he is in great danger if he be not troubled at all. 2. When he is troubled, he is in danger to be over-troubled. 3. When he hath brought his soule in tune againe, he is subject to new troubles. Betwixt this ebbing and flowing there is very little quiet. Now because this cannot be done without a great measure of Gods Spirit, our helpe is to make use of that promise of giving *the holy Ghost* to them *that aske it*. To teach us *when, how long,*

Cap. 8.

Cant. 2.5.

155.6.11.

The life of a Christian is a life of trouble.

Ioh. 11.13.

Cap. 9.

long, and how much to grieve: and when, and how long, and how much to rejoyce; the Spirit must teach the heart this, who as he moved upon the waters before the Creation, so he must move upon the waters of our soules, for we have not the command of our owne hearts. Every naturall man is carried away with his flesh and humours, upon which the devill rides, and carries him whither he list; he hath no better counsellors then flesh and blood, and Satan counselling with them. But a godly man is not a slave to his carnall affections, but (as David here) labours to bring into captivity the first motions of sinne in his heart.

CAP. IX.

Of the soules disquiets, Gods dealings, and power to conaine our selves in order.

Obser. I

Moreover we see, that the soule hath disquiets proper to it selfe, besides those griefes of Sympathy that arise from the body; for here the soule complains

of

of the soule it selfe, as when it is out of the body it hath torments and joyes of its owne. And if these troubles of the soule be not well cured, then by way of fellowship and redundance they will affect the outward man, and so the whole man shall bee inuapt in miserie.

From whence wee further see, that God, when he will humble a man, needs not fetch forces from without, if hee let but our owne hearts loose, wee shall haue trouble and worke enough, though we were as holy as David, God did not onely exercise him with a rebellious sonne out of his owne loynes, but with rebellious risings out of his owne heart. If there were no enemy in the world; nor devill in hell, we carry that within us, that if it be let loose, will trouble us more than all the world besides. Oh that the proud creature should exalt himselfe against God, and runne into a voluntary course of provoking him; who cannot onely raise the humours of our bodies against us, but the passions of our mindes also to torment us.

Cap. 9.

Obser. 2

note it
should
be what
we are
as to our
selves
against
God

Cap. 9.
1 Cor. 10.
32.

Therefore it is the best wisdome not to provoke the great God, for *are we stronger than he*, that can raise our selves against our selves? and worke wonders not onely in the great world, but also in the little world, our soules and bodies when he pleases?

Obser. 3

Wee see likewise hence a necessity of *having something in the soule above it selfe, it must be partaker of a diviner nature than it selfe*; otherwise, when the most refined part of our soules, the very spirit of our mindes is out of frame, what shall bring it in againe? Therefore wee must conceive in a godly man, a double selfe, one which must be denied, the other which must deny; one that breeds all the disquiet, and another that stilleth what the other hath raised. The way to still the soule, as it is under our corrupt selfe, is not to parlee with it, and divide government for peace sake, as if wee should gratifie the flesh in something, to redeeme liberty to the spirit in other things; for wee shall finde the flesh will be too encroching. Wee must strive against it;

not

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not with subtilty and discourse, so much, as with peremptory violence silence it and vex it: An enemy that parles will yeeld at length. Grace is nothing else but that blessed power, whereby as spirituall, wee gaine upon our selves as carnall. Holy love is that which wee gaine of selfe-love; and so joy, and *delight*, &c. Grace labours to winne ground of the old man, untill at length it bee all in all; Indeed wee are never our selves perfectly, till we have wholly put off our selves. Nothing should be at a greater distance to us, than our selves. This is the reason why carnall men that have nothing above themselves but their *corrupt selfe*, sinke in great troubles, having nothing within to uphold them, whereas a good man is wiser than *himselfe*, holier than *himselfe*, stronger than *himselfe*; there is something in him more than a man. There bee evils that the spirit of man alone out of the goodnesse of nature cannot beare, but the spirit of man assisted with an higher spirit, will support and carry him through. It is a good

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triall of a mans condition to know what hee esteemes to be *himselfe*. A godly man counts the inner man, the sanctified part to bee himselfe, whereby hee stands in relation to Christ and a better life. Another man esteemes his contentment in the world, the satisfaction of his carnall desires, the respect hee findes from men by reason of his parts, or something without him, that he is master of, this he counts *himselfe*, and by this he values himselfe, and to this he makes his best thoughts and endeavours serviceable. And of crosses in these things hee is most sensible, and so sensible, that he thinks himselfe undone if hee seeth not a present issue out of them.

That which most troubles a good man in all troubles, is *himselfe*, so farre as hee is unsubdued; hee is more disquieted with *himselfe*, than with all troubles out of *himselfe*; when he hath gotten the better once of *himselfe*, whatsoever falls from without, is light; where the Spirit is enlarged, it cares not much for outward bondage, where the

Cap. 9.

the spirit is lightsome, it cares not much for outward darknesse; where the spirit is settled, it cares not much for outward changes; where the spirit is one with it selfe, it can beare outward breaches; where the spirit is sound, it can beare outward sicknesse. Nothing can be very ill with us, when all is well within. This is the comfort of a holy man, that though hee bee troubled with himselfe, yet by reason of the spirit in him which is his *best selfe*, hee workes out by degrees, what ever is contrary. As Spring-water being cleere of it selfe, workes it selfe cleane, though it be troubled by something cast in; as the Sea will endure no poysonfull thing, but casts it upon the shore. But a carnall man is like a Spring corrupted, that cannot worke it selfe cleare, because it is wholly tainted; his eye and light is darknesse, and therefore no wonder if hee seeth nothing. Sinne lieth upon his understanding, and hinders the knowledge of it selfe; it lies close upon the will, and hinders the striving against it selfe.

no

I 4

True

Cap. 9.

True *selfe* that is worth the owning, is when a man is taken into a higher condition, and made one with Christ, and esteemes neither of himselfe nor others, as happy for any thing according to the flesh. 1. Hee is under the law and government of the Spirit, and so farre as he is himselfe, works according to that principle. 2. Hee labours more and more to be transformed into the likenesse of Christ, in whom hee esteemeth that hee hath his best being. 3. He esteemes of all things that befall him, to be good or ill, as they further or hinder his best condition. If all be well for that, he counts himselfe well, whatsoever else befalls him.

Another man when hee doth any thing that is good, acts not his own part; but a godly man when hee doth good, is in his proper element; what another man doth for by-ends and reasons, that *hee* doth from a new nature; which if there were no Law to compell, yet would move him to that which is pleasing to Christ. If hee be drawne aside by passion or temptation,

on, *that* hee judgeth not to bee himselfe, but taketh a holy revenge on himselfe for it, as being redeemed and taken out from himselfe; hee thinkes himselfe no *debtor*; nor to owe any service to his corrupt selfe. That which he plots and projects and workes for is, that Christ may rule every where, and especially in himselfe, for hee is not his owne but Christs, and therefore desires to bee more and more emptied of himselfe, that Christ might bee *all in all* in him.

Thus we see, what great use there is of dealing with our selves, for the better composing and setting of our soules. Which though it bee a course without glory and ostentation in the world, as causing a man to retire inwardly into his owne breast, having no other witness but God and himselfe, and though it bee likewise irksome to the flesh, as calling the soule home to it selfe, being desirous naturally to wander abroad, and bee a stranger at home: Yet it is a course both good in it selfe, and makes the soule good.

For

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For by this meanes the judgement is exercised and rectified, the will and affections ordered, the whole man put into an holy frame fit for every good action. By this the tree is made good, and the fruit cannot but be answerable; by this the soule it selfe is set in tune, whence there is a pleasant harmony in our whole conversation. Without this, wee may doe that which is outwardly good to others, but wee can never bee good our selves. The first justice begins within, when there is a due subjection of all the powers of the soule to the spirit, as sanctified and guided by Gods Spirit; when justice and order is first established in the soule, it will appeare from thence in all our doings. Hee that is at peace in himselfe, will bee peaceable to others, peaceable in his family, peaceable in the Church, peaceable in the State; The soule of a wicked man is in perpetuall sedition; being alwayes troubled in it selfe, it is no wonder if it bee troublesome to others. Uniry in our selves is before union with others.

*Unitas est
regnum.*

bono consilio

To

To conclude this first part, concerning intercourse with our selves. As wee desire to enjoy our selves, and to live the life of men, and of Christians, which is, to understand our wayes: as we desire to live comfortably, and not to be accessary of yeelding to that sorrow which causeth death: As wee desire to answer GOD and our selves, when wee are to give an account of the inward tumults of our soules: As wee desire to be vessells prepared for every good worke, and to have strength to undergoe any crosse: As wee desire to have healthy soules, and to keepe a Sabbath within our selves: As wee desire not onely to doe good, but to be good in our selves: So let us labour to quiet our soules, and often ask a reason of our selves, *Why we should not be quiet?*

1.
Chap. 9
of the
soul
thoughts

CAP.

Cap. 10.

CAP. X.

Meanes not to be overcharged with sor-

row.

TO helpe us further herein, besides that which hath beene formerly spoken,

I.
Changes
must be
fore-
thought of

I. Wee must take heed of building an ungrounded confidence of happinesse for time to come; which makes us when changes come; 1. Unacquainted with them; 2. takes away expectation of them; 3. and preparation for them. When any thing is strange and sudden, and lights upon us unfurnished and unfenced, it must needs put our spirits out of frame. It is good therefore to make all kinde of troubles familiar to us, in our thoughts at least; and this will breake the force of them. It is good to fence our soules beforehand against all assaults, as men use to keepe out the Sea, by raising bankes; and if a breach be made, to repaire it presently.

Wee

Wee had need to maintaine a strong Garrison of holy Reasons against the assaults of strong passions; wee may hope for the best, but feare the worst, and prepare to beare whatsoever. We say that a set diet is dangerous, because variety of occasions will force us upon breaking of it: So in this world of changes, wee cannot resolve upon any certaine condition of life, for upon alteration the minde is out of frame. We cannot say this or that trouble shall not befall, yet wee may by helpe of the Spirit, say, nothing that doth befall, shall make mee doe that which is unworthy of a Christian.

That which others make easie by suffering, that a wise man maketh easie by thinking of before hand. If we expect the worst, when it comes, it is no more than wee thought of. If better befalls us, then it is the sweeter to us, the lesse wee expected it. Our Saviour foretels the worst: *In the world you shall have tribulation*, therefore looke for it, but then hee will not leave us: Satan deludes with many promises: but when

*Quae aliis
dum patiuntur
levis facili,
sapienter levis
facit dum
cogitanda.*

Ioh. 16. 33

Cap. 10.

Heb. 4.9.

Rev. 14. 13

Caution

when the contrary falls out; hee leaves his followers in their distresses. Wee desire peace and rest, but wee seeke it not in its owne place; *There is a rest for Gods people*, but that is not here, nor yet, but it remaines for them; *they rest from their labours*, but that is after they are *dead in the Lord*. There is no sound rest till then. Yet this Caution must be remembered, that wee shape not in our fancies such troubles as are never likely to fall out. It comes either from weaknesse or guiltinesse, to feare shadowes. We shall not need to make crosses, they will (as we say of foule weather) come before they bee sent for. How many evils doe people feare, from which they have no further hurt, then what is bred onely by their causelesse feares. Nor yet if they bee *probable*, must wee thinke of them so, as to bee altogether so affected, as if undoubtedly they would come, for so wee give certaine strength to an uncertaine crosse, and usurpe upon God, by anticipating that which may never come to passe. It was rashnesse in *David* to say, *I shall*

1 Sā. 27. 1.

one

one day perish by the hand of Saul.

Cap. 10.

If they be such troubles, as will certainly come to passe, as parting with friends and contentments (at least) by death; then 1. *thinke* of them so, as not to be much dismayed, but furnish thy heart with strength before-hand, that they may fall the lighter. 2. *Thinke* of them so, as not to give up the bucklers to passion, and lie open as a faire mark for any uncomfortable accident to strike to the heart; nor yet so thinke of them as to despise them, but to consider of Gods meaning in them, and how to take good by them. 3. *Thinke* of the things we enjoy, so as to moderate our enjoying of them, by considering there must bee a parting, and therefore how wee shall bee able to beare it when it comes.

2. *If we desire* not to be overcharged with sorrow, when that which we feare is fallen upon us, we must then before-hand looke that our love to any thing in this world, shoot not so farre, as that, when the time of severing commeth, we part with so much of our hearts by
that

2.

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that rent. Those that love too much, will alwayes grieve too much. It is the greatnesse of our affections which causeth the sharpnesse of our afflictions. He that cannot abound without pride and high-mindednesse, will not want without too much dejectednesse. Love is planted for such things as can returne love, and make us better by loving them, wherein we shall satisfie our love to the full. It is pittie so sweet an affection should be lost: So sorrow is for sinne, and for other things as they make sinne the more bitter to us. The life of a Christian should be a meditation how to unloose his affections from inferior things; he will easily die that is dead before in affection. But this will never be unlesse the soule seeth something better than all things in the world, upon which it may bestow it selfe. In that measure our affections dye in their excessive motion to things below, as they are taken up with the love and admiration of the best things. He that is much in heaven in his thoughts, is free from being tossed with tempests here below.

Cap. 10.

below; the top of those mountaines that are above the middle Region, are so quiet, as that the lightest things (as ashes) lie still and are not moved. The way to *mortifie earthly members* that be-
 stirre themselves in us, is to *mind things above*: The more the wayes of wisdome lead us on high, the more we avoid the snares below.

Col. 3. 1.
& 5.

In the uncertainty of all events here, labour to frame that contentment in and from our owne selves, which the things themselves will not yeeld; frame peace by freeing our hearts from too much feare, and riches by freeing our hearts from covetous desires. Frame a sufficiency out of contentednesse; If the soule it selfe be out of tune, outward things will doe no more good than a faire shooe to a gouty foot.

And seeke not our selves abroad out of our selves in the conceits of other men. A man shall never live quietly, that hath not learned to be set light by of others. Hee that is little in his owne eyes, will not be troubled to be little in the eyes of others. Men that set too
 K high

Cap. 10. high a price upon themselves, when others will not come to their price, are discontent. Those whose condition is above their worth, & their pride above their condition, shall never want sorrow; yet we must maintaine our authority and the Image of God in our places, for that is Gods and not ours; and we ought so to carry our selves as we approve our selves to their consciences, though we have not their good words; *Let none despise thy youth, saith Saint Paul to Timothy; that is, Walke so before them as they shall have no cause.* It is not in our owne power what other men thinke or speake, but it is in our power (by Gods grace) to live so, that none can thinke ill of us, but by slandering, and none beleeve ill but by too much credulity.

3. When any thing seiseth upon us, we must take heed wee mingle not our owne passions with it; we must neither bring sinne to, nor mingle sinne with the suffering: for that will trouble the spirit more than the trouble it selfe. Wee are more to deale with our owne hearts.

hearts, than with the trouble it selfe. We are not hurt till our soules be hurt. God will not have it in the power of any creature to hurt our soules, but by our owne treason against our selves.

Therefore we should have our hearts in continuall jealousie, for they are ready to deceive the best. In suddaine encounters, some sinne doth many times discover it selfe, the seed whereof lieth hid in our natures, which wee thinke our selves very free from. Who would have thought the seeds of murmuring had lurked in the meeke nature of *Moses*? That the seeds of *wrath* had lurked in the pitifull heart of *David*? That the seeds of *deniall* of *Christ* had lien hid in the zealous affection of *Peter* towards *Christ*? If passions break out from us, which we are not naturally enclined unto, and over which by grace wee have got a great conquest; how watchfull need wee bee over our selves in those things, which by *temper*, *custome*, and *company*, wee are carried unto? and what cause have wee to feare continually that wee are worse

2 *St. 12.9**Mat. 26.72*

Cap. 10.

than wee take our selves to be ?

There are many unruly passions lie hid in us, untill they be drawne out by something that meeteth with them; either 1. by way of opposition, as when the truth of God spiritually unfolded, meets with some beloved corruption, it swelleth bigger; the force of Gunpowder is not knowne untill some sparke light on it; and oftentimes the stillest natures (if crossed) discover the deepest corruptions. Sometimes it is drawne out by dealing with the opposite spirits of other men. Oftentimes retyred men know not what lies hid in themselves.

2. Sometimes by crosses, as many people whilest the freshnesse and vigour of their spirits lasteth, and while the flower of age, and a full supply of all things continueth, seeme to be of a pleasing and calme disposition; but afterwards when changes come, like *Job's wife*, they are discovered. Then, that which in nature is unsubdued, openly appears.

3. Temptations likewise have a search.

searching power to bring thatto light in us which was hidden before. Sathan hath beene a winnower, and a sifter of old: he thought if *Iob* had beene but touched in his body, he would have cursed God to his face.

Some men out of policy conceale their passion, untill they see some advantage to let it out; as *Esau* smothered his *hatred* untill his *fathers death*. When the restraint is taken away, Men (as we say) shew themselves in their pure naturalls; unloose a Tyger or a Lyon, and you know what he is.

4. Further, let us see more every day into the state of our owne soules; what a shame is it that so nimble and swift a spirit as the soule is that can mount up to heaven, & from thence come downe into the earth in an instant, should whilest it lookes over all other things over-look it selfe? that it should bee skilfull in the story (almost) of all times and places, and yet ignorant of the story of it selfe? that we should know what is done in the *Court* and *Country*, and beyond the *Sea*, and be ignorant

Cap. 10.

Luke 22. 3.

Iob 1.

*Aperta per-
dunt odia
vindictæ lo-
cum.*

*Solve Leonē
et senties.*

4.

Cap. 10.

of what is done at home in our owne hearts? that we should live knowne to others, and yet die unknowne to our selves? that wee should be able to give account of any thing better than of our selves to our selves? This is the cause why we stand in our owne light; why wee thinke better of our selves, than others, and better than is cause. This is that which hindreth all reformation; for how can wee reforme that which wee are not willing to see, and so wee lose one of the surest evidences of our sincerity, which is, a willingnesse to search into our hearts, and to be searched by others. A sincere heart will offer it selfe to triall.

And therefore let us sift our actions, and our passions, and see what is *flesh* in them, and what is *spirit*, and so separate the *precious* from the *vile*. It is good likewise to consider what sinne we were guilty of before, which moved God to give us up to excesse in any passion, and wherein we have grieved his Spirit; Passion will bee more moderate, when thus it knowes, it must come

come to the triall and censure. This course will either make us weary of passion, or else passion will make us weary of this strict course. Wee shall finde it the safest way to give our hearts no rest, till wee have wrought on them to purpose, and gotten the mastery over them.

When the soule is inured to this dealing with it selfe, it will learne the skill to command, and passions will be soone commanded, as being inured to be examined and checked; As we see dogs, and such like domesticall creatures, that will not regard a stranger, yet will bee quieted in brawles presently, by the voice of their *Master*, to which they are accustomed. This fits us for service. Unbroken spirits are like unbroken horses, unfit for any use, untill they bee thorowly subdued.

5. And it were best to prevent (as much as in us lieth) the very first risings, before the soule bee overcast; Passions are but little motions at the first, but grow as Rivers doe, greater and greater, the further they are car-

5.
We must
crush the
first moti
ons of sin

Cap. 19.

ried from their Spring. The first *risings* are the more to be looked unto, because there is most danger in them, and we have least care over them. Sin, like rust, or a Canker, will by little and little *eat out* all the graces of the soule. There is no staying when wee are once downe the hill, till we come to the bottome. *No sinne but is easier kept out, than driven out.* If wee cannot prevent wicked thoughts, yet wee may deny them lodging in our hearts. It is our giving willing entertainment to sinfull motions, that increaseth guilt, and hindreth our peace. It is that which moveth God to give us up to a further degree of evill affections. Therefore what we are afraid to *doe* before men, wee should bee afraid to *thinke* before G O D. It would much further our peace to keepe our *judgements* cleare, as being the eye of the soule, whereby we may discern in every action and passion, what is good, and what is evill: as likewise to preserve tenderneffe of heart, that may checke us at the first, and not brooke the least evill being discovered. When the

the heart begins once to be kindled, it is easie to smother the smoke of passion, which other wise will fume up into the head, and gather into so thicke a cloud, as wee shall lose the sight of our selves, and what is best to bee done. And therefore *David* here labours to take up his heart at the first; his care was to crush the very *first* insurrections of his soule, before they came to break forth into open rebellion; stormes wee know rise out of little gusts. Little risings neglected, cover the soule before wee are aware. If wee would checke these risings, and stifle them in their birth, they would not breake out afterwards to the reproach of Religion, to the scandall of the weak, to the offense of the strong, to the *griefe of Gods Spirit* in us, to the disturbance of our owne spirits in doing good, and to the disheartning of us in troubling of our inward peace, and thereby weakning our assurance. Therefore let us stop beginnings as much as may bee; and so soone as they begin to rise, let us begin to examine what raised them, and whither

Cap. 10.
Pſalm. 4.

Pſa. 73. 22

whither they are about to carry us. The way to bee *ſill*, is to *examine* our ſelves firſt; And then cenſure what ſtands not with reaſon. As *David* doth, when he had given way to unbe- fitting thoughts of Gods providence, *So fooliſh*, ſaith hee, *was I, and as a beaſt before thee.*

Eſpecially, then looke to theſe ſin- full ſtirrings, when thou art to deale with God. I am to have communion with a God of peace; What then doe turbulent thoughts and affections in my heart? I am to deale with a patient God, why ſhould I cheriſh revenge- full thoughts? *Abraham* drove away the *birds* from the *ſacrifice*, *Gen. 15. 11.* Troubleſome thoughts like birds will come before they bee ſent for, but they ſhould finde entertainment accordingly.

6.

6. In all our grievances, let us looke to ſomething that may comfort us, as well as diſcourage: looke to that wee enjoy, as well as that wee want. As in proſperity God mingles ſome croſſes to diet us; ſo in all croſſes there is
ſomething

something to comfort us. As there is a vanity lies hid in the best *worldly good*, so there is a blessing lies hid in the worst *worldly evill*. God usually maketh up that with some advantage in another kinde, wherein wee are inferior to others. Others are in greater place, so they are in greater danger. Others bee richer, so their cares and snares be greater; the *poore in the world* may bee *richer in faith* than they. The soule can better digest and master a low estate than a prosperous, and is under some abasement. It is in a lesse distance from God. Others are not so afflicted as we, then they have lesse experience of Gods gracious power than wee. Others may haue more healthy bodies, but soules lesse weaned from the world. We would not change conditions with them, so as to have their spirits with their condition. For one halfe of our lives, the meanest are as happy and free from cares, as the greatest Monarch: that is, whilst both sleepe; and usually the sleepe of the one, is sweeter than the sleepe of the other.

Cap. 10.

1im. 2, 5.

Cap. 10.

other. What is all that the earth can afford us, if God deny health? and this a man in the meanest condition may enjoy. That wherein one man differs from another, is but title, and but for a little time; Death leuelleth all.

There is scarce any man, but the good hee receives from God is more than the ill he feeles, if our unthankfull hearts would suffer us to thinke so. Is not our health more than our sicknesse? doe we not enjoy more than we want, I meane, of the things that are necessary? Are not our good dayes more than our evill? but we would goe to heaven upon Roses, and usually one crosse is more taken to heart, than an hundred blessings. So unkindly wee deale with God. Is God indebted to us? doth hee owe us any thing? those that deserve nothing, should be content with any thing.

Wee should looke to others as good as our selves (as well as to our selves) and then wee shall see it is not our owne case onely; who are we that we should looke for an exempted condition from
those

those troubles which Gods dearest children are addicted unto? Cap. 10.

Thus when we are surprized contrary to our looking for and liking, wee should study rather how to exercise some grace, than give way to any passion. Thinke, now is a time to exercise our *patience*, our *wisdom*, and other graces. By this meanes we shall turne that to our greatest advantage, which *Satan* intendeth greatest hurt to us by. Thus we shall not onely master every condition, but make it serviceable to our good. If nature teach *Bees*, not onely to gather honey out of sweet flowers, but out of bitter: Shall not grace teach us to draw even out of the bitterest condition, something to better our soules? Wee learne to tame all creatures, even the wildest, that we may bring them to our use; and why should wee give way to our owne unruly passions?

7. It were good to have in our eye, the beauty of a well ordered soule, and wee should thinke that nothing in this world is of sufficient worth to put us

our

Cap. 10.

out of frame. The sanctified soule should be like the *Sunne* in this, which though it worketh upon all these inferiour bodies, and cherisheth them by light and influence; yet is not moved nor wrought upon by them againe, but keepeth its owne lustre and distance: So our Spirits being of a heavenly breed, should rule other things beneath them, and not be ruled by them. It is a holy state of soule to bee under the power of nothing beneath it selfe; Are we stirred? then consider, Is this matter worth the losse of my quiet? What wee esteeme, that wee love, what wee love, wee labour for; And therefore let us esteeme highly of a cleare calme temper, whereby wee both enjoy our God, and our selves, and know how to ranke all things else. It is against nature for inferiour things to rule that, which the wise Disposer of all things hath set above them. Wee owe the *flesh* neither suit nor service, wee are no *debtors* to it.

The more wee set before the soule that quiet estate in heaven, which the
soules

soules of perfect men now enjoy, and it selfe ere long shall enjoy there, The more it will be in love with it, and endeavour to attaine unto it. And because the soule never worketh better, than when it is raised up by some strong and sweet affection; let us looke upon our nature, as it is in Christ, in whom it is pure, sweet, calme, meeke, every way lovely. This fight is a changing fight, love is an affection of imitation, we affect a likenesse to him we love. Let us *learne of Christ to be humble and meeke*, and then we *shall finde rest to our soules*. The setting of an excellent idea and platforme before us, will raise and draw up our soules higher, and make us sensible of the least moving of spirit, that shall be contrary to that, the attaine-ment whereof wee have in our desires. He will hardly attaine to meane things, that sets not before him higher perfection. Naturally we love to see symetry and proportion, even in a dead picture, and are much taken with some curious peece. But why should we not rather labour to keepe the affections of the soule

Cap. 10.

Anima nunquam melius agit, quid ex imperio aliusque insignis affectus.

MIL. 11. 39

Cap. 10.

soule in due proportion? Seeing a meek and well ordered soule is not onely lovely in the sight of men and Angels, but is much set by, by the great God himselfe. But now the greatest care of those that set highest price upon themselves is, how to compose their outward carriage in some gracefull manner, never studying how to compose their spirits; and rather how to cover the deformity of their passions than to cure them. Whence it is that the foulest inward vices are covered with the fairest vizards, and to make this the worse, all this is counted the best breeding.

The *Hebrewes* placed all their happinesse in peace, and when they would comprise much in one word, they would wish peace. This was that the *Angels* brought news of from *heaven*, at the birth of Christ. Now peace riseth out of quietnesse and order, and God that is *the God of peace, is the God of order* first. What is health, but when all the members are in their due positure, and all the humors in a settled quiet? Whence

1 Cor. 14.

33.

Whence ariseth the beauty of the world, but from that comely order wherein every creature is placed; the more glorious and excellent creatures above, and the lesse below? So it is in the soule; the best constitution of it is when by the Spirit of God it is so ordered, as that all be in subjection to the law of the minde. What a sight were it for the feet to be where the head is, and the earth to bee where the heaven is, to see all turned upside downe? And to a spirituall eye it seemes as great a deformity, to see the soule to bee under the rule of sinfull passions.

Comelinesse riseth out of the fit proportion of divers members to make up one body, when every member hath a beauty in it selfe, and is likewise well suited to other parts; A faire face and a crooked body; comely upper parts, and the lower parts uncomely, suit not well; because comelinesse stands in openesse, in a fit agreement of many parts to one; when there is the head of a man, and the body of a beast, it is a monster in nature; And is

There must be an uniformity in the lives of Christians.

Cap. 10.

it not as monstrous for to haue an understanding head, and a fierce untamed heart? It cannot but raise up a holy indignation in us against these *risings*, when wee consider how unbeseeming they are; What doe these base passions in a heart dedicated to God, and given up to the government of his Spirit? What an indignity is it for Princes to goe a foot, and servants on horse back? for those to rule, whose place is to be ruled? as being good attendants, but bad guides. It was *Chams* curse to be a *servant of servants*.

8.

8. This must bee strengthened with a strong *selfe-denial*, without which there can be no good done in Religion.

There be two things that most trouble us in the way to heaven; corruption within us, and the crosse without us; that which is within us must be denied, that that which is without us may bee endured. Otherwise we cannot follow him by whom wee looke to bee saved. The gate, the entrance of Religion, is narrow; we must strip our selves of our selves before we can enter; if we bring
any

Christians
must deny
themselves

any ruling lust to Religion, it will prove a bitter root of some grosse sinne, or of apostacie and finall desperation.

Those that sought the *praise of men*, more than the *praise of God*, could not beleevē, because that lust of ambition, would, when it should be crossed, draw them away. The young man thought it better for Christ to lose a Disciple, than that hee should *lose his possession*, and therefore *went away* as hee came: The *third ground* came to nothing, because the Plough had not gone deepe enough to breake up the rootes, whereby their hearts were fastned to earthly contentments. This selfe-deniall wee must cary with us through all the parts of Religion, both in our active and passive obedience; for in obedience there must bee a subjection to a superior; but corrupt selfe, *neither is subject, nor can bee*, it will have an oare in every thing, and maketh every thing, yea, Religion serviceable to it self. It is the Idol of the world, or rather the god that is set highest of al in the soule; and so God himselfe is made but an Idol. It is hard

Cap. 10.

Ioh. 12.43

Mat. 19.22

Mat. 13.22

Rom. 8.

Cap. 11.

Mlc. 6.

to deny a friend who is another selfe, harder to deny a wife that lieth in the bosome, but most hard to deny our selves. Nothing so neere us as our selves to our selves, and yet nothing so farre off. Nothing so dear, and yet nothing so malicious and troublesome. Hypocrites would part with *the fruit of their body*, sooner than *the sinne* of their soules.

CAP. XI.

Signes of victory over our selves, and of a subdued spirit.

Quest.

But how shall wee know, whether wee have by grace got the victory over our selves or not?

Answ.

I.

I answer, If in good actions we stand not so much upon the credit of the action, as upon the good that is done. What wee doe as unto God, we looke for acceptance from God. It was *Jonas* his fault to stand more upon his owne reputation, than the glory of Gods mercy. It is a prevailing signe, when though there bee no outward encourage-

rage.

ragements; Nay, though there be discouragements, yet wee can rest in the comfort of a good intention. For usually inward comfort is a note of inward sincerity. *Iehū* must be *seene*, or else all is lost.

a King. vo.
16.

2. It is a good evidence of some prevailing, when upon Religious grounds wee can crosse our selves in those things unto which our hearts stand most affected, this sheweth wee reserve God his owne place in our hearts.

2.

3. When being priy to our owne inclination and temper, wee have gotten such a supply of spirit, as that the grace which is contrary to our temper appeares in us. As oft wee see, none more patient, than those that are naturally enclined to intemperancy of passion, because naturall pronenesse maketh them jealous over themselves. Some, out of feare of being over-much moved, are not moved so much as they should be: This jealousie stirreth us up to a carefull use of all helps; Where grace is helped by nature, there a little

3.

Cap. 11.

grace will goe farre; but where there is much untowardnesse of nature, there much grace is not so well discerned. *Sowre wines need much sweetning*; And that is most spirituall which hath least helpe from nature, and is won by praier and paines.

4.

4. When wee are not partiall when the things concerne our selves. *David* could allow himselfe another mans wife, and yet judgeth another man worthy of death for taking away a *poore mans lambe*. Men usually favour themselves too much, when they are Chancellors in their owne cause, and measure all things by their private interest. Hee hath taken a good degree in *Christs Schoole*, that hath learned to forget himselfe here.

: 51. 12. 4.

5.

5. It is a good signe, when upon discovery of self-seeking we can gaine upon our corruption; and are willing to search and to be seached, what our inclination is, and where it faileth. That which we favour, we are tender of, it must not bee touched. A good heart, when any corruption is discovered by a searching

a searching *Ministry*, is affected as if it had found out a deadly enemy. Touchinesse and passion argues guilt.

6. This is a signe of a mans victory over himselfe, when hee loves health and peace of body and minde, with a supply of all needfull things, chiefly for this end, that hee may with more freedome of spirit serve God in doing good to others. So soone as grace entreteth into the heart, it frameth the heart to be in some measure publique: and thinks it hath not its end, in the bare enjoying of any thing, untill it can improve what it hath for a further end. Thus to seeke our selves is to deny our selves, and thus to deny our selves, is truly to seeke our selves. It is no selfe-seeking, when wee care for no more than that, without which we cannot comfortably serve God. When the soule can say unto God, Lord as thou wouldest have me serve thee in my place, so grant mee such a measure of health and strength, wherein I may serve thee.

6.

But what if God thinks it good, that

Object.

L 4

I shall

Cap. 11.

I shall serve him in weakenesse, and in want, and suffering.

Answ.

Then, it is a comfortable signe of gaining over our owne wills, when wee can yeeld our selves to bee disposed of by God, as knowing best what is good for us. There is no condition but therein we may exercise some grace, and honour God in some measure. Yet because some enlargement of condition is ordinarily that estate wherein wee are best able to doe good in; wee may in the use of meanes desire it, and upon that, resigne up our selves wholly unto God, and make his will our will, without exception or reservation, and care for nothing more than wee can have with his leave and love. This *Iob* had exercised his heart unto; whereupon in that great change of condition, *hee sinned not*, that is, fell not into the finnes incident to that dejected and miserable state; into finnes of rebellion and discontent. He carried his crosses comely, with that stayednesse and resignednesse, which became a holy man,

Iob 2.

7. It is further a cleere evidence of a spirit subdued, when wee will discover the truth of our affection towards God and his people, though with censure of others. *David* was content to endure the censure of neglecting the state and Majesty of a King, out of joy for setting the Arke. *Nehemiah* could not dissemble his griefe for the ruines of the Church, though in the Kings presence: It is a comfortable signe of the wasting of selfe-love, when wee can bee at a point what becomes of our selves, so it goe well with the cause of God and the Church.

Cap. 11.

7.

Neh. 2. 3.

Now the way to prevaile still more over our selves, (as when we are to doe or suffer any thing, or withstand any person in a good cause, &c.) is, not to thinke that wee are to deale with men, yea, or with Devils so much as with our selves. The Saints resisted their enemies to death, by resisting their owne corruptions first: if we once get the victory over our selves, all other things are conquered to our ease. All the hurt Satan and the world doo us, is, by

How to
get the
mastery of
our selves.

Csp. 11.

Te vince et
mundus tibi
victus est,
&c.

by correspondency with our selves. All things are so far under us, as we are above our selves.

For the further subduing of our selves, it is good to follow sinne to the first Hold and Castle, which is corrupt nature ; The streames will leade us to the Spring-head : Indeed the most apparent discovery of sinne is in the outward carriage ; wee see it in the fruit before in the root ; as wee see grace in the expression before in the affection : But yet we shall never hate sin thorowly, untill we consider it in the poysoned root from whence it ariseth.

That which least troubles a naturall man, doth most of all trouble a true Christian ; A naturall man is sometimes troubled with the fruit of his corruption , and the consequents of guilt and punishment that attend it ; but a true hearted Christian, with corruption it selfe ; this drives him to complaine with Saint Paul, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver mee, not from the members onely, but from this body of death ?* which is as noysome to

Rom. 7.

to

to my soule, as a dead carrion is to my senses; which together with the members, is marvellously nimble and active; and hath no dayes, or houres, or minuits of rest; alwayes laying about it to enlarge it selfe, and like spring-water, which the more it issueth out, the more it may.

It is a good way, upon any particular breach of our inward peace, presently to have recourse to that which breeds and fomentes all our disquiet: Lord, what doe I complaine of this my unruly passion? I carry a *nature* about mee subject to breake out continually upon any occasion; Lord, strike at the root, and dry up the fountaine in mee. Thus *David* doth arise from the guilt of those two foule sinnes, of *Murder* and *adultery*, to the sin of this nature, the root it selfe; As if he should say, Lord, it is not these actuall sinnes that defile mee onely; but if I looke backe to my first conception, I was tainted in the spring of my nature.

This is that here which put *Dauids* soule so much out of frame; For from whence

Cap. 11.

Gen. 19. 9.

whence was this contradiction? And whence was this contradiction so unwearied, in making head againe and againe against the checks of the Spirit in him? Whence was it that *Corruption* would not be said *Nay*? Whence were these *sudden* and unlookt for objections of the *flesh*? But from the remainder of old *Adam* in him, which like a *Michel* within us is either *scoffing* at the wayes of God; or as *Iobs wife*, fretting and *thwarting* the motions of Gods Spirit in us; which prevails the more, because it is homebred in us: whereas holy motions are strangers to most of our soules. Corruption is loth that a *new commer in* should take so much upon him as to *controule*: As the *Sodomites* thought much that *Lot* being a *stranger* should intermeddle amongst them. If God once leave us as hee did *Hezekiah* to try what is in us, what should he finde but darknesse, rebellion, unrulinesse, doubtings, &c. in the best of us? This *flesh* of ours hath principles against all Gods principles, and lawes against all Gods lawes, and reasons against

gainst all Gods reasons. Oh ! if wee could but one whole houre seriously think of the impure issue of our hearts, it would bring us downe upon our knees in humiliation before God. But wee can never whilest we live, so thoroughly as we should, see into the depth of our deceitfull hearts, nor yet bee humbled enough for what we see ; For though wee speake of it and confesse it, yet wee are not so sharpned against this corrupt flesh of ours, as wee should. How should it humble us, that the seeds of the vilest sinne, even of the *sinne against the Holy Ghost* is in us ? and no thanke to us that they breake not out. It should humble us to heare of any great enormous sinne in another man, considering what our owne nature would proceed unto if it were not restrained. We may see our owne nature in them as *face answering face* ; If God should take his *Spirit* from us, there is enough in us to defile a whole world ; And although wee bee ingrafted into Christ, yet wee carry about us a relish of the old stocke still. *David* was a
man

Cap. 11.

152. 24. 6.

Eccl. 30. 6

man of a good naturall constitution; and for grace, a man after Gods owne heart, and had got the better of himselfe in a great measure; and had learned to overcome himselfe in matter of revenge, as in *Sauls* case: yet now wee see the vessell is shaken a little, and the dregs appeare that were in the bottome before. Alas, wee know not our owne hearts, till we plow with Gods heifer, till his Spirit bringeth a light into our soules. It is good to consider how this impure *spring* breaks out *diversly*, in the divers conditions wee are in; there is no estate of life, nor no action wee undertake, wherein it will not put forth it selfe to defile us: It is so full of poyson that it taints whatsoever wee doe, both our natures, conditions, and actions. In a *prosperous* condition (like *David*) we thinke we shall never be moved. Under the *Crosse* the soule is troubled and drawne to murmure, and to bee sullen, and sinke downe in discouragement, to be in a heat almost to blasphemy, to be weary of our callings, and to quarrell with every thing in our way. See the folly

folly and fury of most men in this, for us silly wormes to contradict the great God: And to whose perill is it? Is it not our owne? Let us gather our selves with all our wit and strength together: Alas, what can wee doe but provoke him, and get more stripes? Wee may bee sure hee will deale with us, as wee deale with our children, if they be forward and unquiet for lesser matters, we will make them cry and bee fullen for something: Refractory stubborne horses are the more spurred, and yet shake not off the rider.

CAP. XII.

Of Originall righteousnesse, naturall corruption, Satans joyning with it, and our duty thereupon.

§. I.

BUt here marke a plot of spirituall treason; Satan joyning with our corruption, setteth the wit on worke to perswade the soule, that this inward rebellion is not so bad, because it is naturall

Cap. 12.

Most of the most dangerous opinions of Popery, as Iustification by works, state of perfection, merit, satisfaction, supererogation, &c. spring from hence, that they have sleight conceits of concupiscence as a condition of nature; Yet some of them as Michael Bayns Professor at Louane, &c. are found in the point.

Ans^r.

Gen. 1.

turall to us, as a condition of nature, rising out of the first principles in our creation, and was curbed in by the bridle of originall righteousness, which they would have accessary and supernaturall, and therefore alledge that *concupiscence* is lesse odious and more excusable in us, and so no great danger in yeelding and betraying our Soules unto it, and by that meanes perswading us, that that which is our deadliest enemy, hath no harme in it, nor meaneth any to us.

This rebellion of lusts against the understanding, is not naturall, as our nature came out of Gods hands at the first: For this being evill and the cause of evill, could not come from God who is Good, and the cause of all good, and nothing but good: who upon the creation of all things pronounced them *good*, and after the creation of man pronounced of all things that they were *very good*. Now that which is ill and very ill, cannot bee seated at the same time in that which is good and *very good*. God created man at the first, *right,*

right, he of himselfe sought out many inventions. As God beautified the heaven with starres, and decked the earth with variety of plants, and herbs, and flowers; So hee adorned man his prime creature here below, with all those endowments that were fit for a happy condition, and originall righteousness was fit and due to an originall and happy condition. Therefore as the Angels were created with all Angelicall perfections, and as our bodies were created in an absolute temper of all the humours; so the soule was created in that sweet harmony wherein there was no discord, as an instrument in tune fit to be moved to any duty; as a cleane neat glasse the soul represented Gods image and holinesse.

§. 2.

Therefore it is so farre, that concupiscence should bee *naturall*, that the contrary to it, namely, *Righteousnesse*, wherein *Adam* was created, was naturall to him; though it were planted in mans nature by God, and so in re-

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Cap. 12.

gard of the cause of it, was supernaturall, yet because it was agreeable to that happy condition, without which he could not subsist, in that respect it was naturall, and should have beene derived (if hee had stood) together with his nature, to his posterity. As heat in the ayre, though it hath its first impression from the heate of the Sunne, yet is naturall, because it agreeth to the nature of that element: and though man be compounded of a spirituall and earthly substance, yet it is naturall that the *baser* earthly part should bee subject to the *Superiour*, because where there is different degrees of worthinesse, it is fit there should bee a subordination of the meaner to that which is in order higher. The body *naturally* desires food and bodily contentments, yet in a man indued with *reason*, this desire is governed so as it becomes not inordinate: A beast sinnes not in its appetite, because it hath no power above to order it. A man that lives in a solitary place farre remote from company, may take his liberty to live as it pleaseth him;

him ; but if he comes to live under the government of some well ordered Citie, then hee is bound to submit to the lawes, and customes of that City, under penalty, upon any breach of order; so the risings of the soule, howsoever in other creatures they are not blameable, having no commander in themselves, above them, yet in man they are to bee ordered by reason and judgement.

Therefore it cannot be, that *concupiscence* should be *naturall*, in regard of the state of creation ; It was *Adams* sin which had many sinnes in the wombe of it, that brought this disorder upon the Soule; *Adams* person first corrupted our nature, and nature being corrupted, corrupts our persons, and our persons being corrupted, encrease the corruption of our nature; by *custome* of sinning, which is another nature in us; as a streame the farther it runnes from the spring head, the more it enlargeth its channell, by the running of lesser rivers into it, untill it empties it selfe into the Sea ; So corruption, till it bee

Cap. 12.

overpowred by *grace*, swelleth bigger and bigger, so that though this disorder was not naturall, in regard of the first creation, yet since the *fall* it is become *naturall*, even as wee call that which is common to the whole kinde, and propagated from parents to their children, to bee naturall; So that it is both naturall, and against nature, *naturall* now, but against *nature* in its first perfection.

- And because corruption is *naturall* to us, therefore
1. we *delight* in it, whence it comes to passe, that our soules are carried along in an easie current, to the committing of any sinne without opposition.
 2. Because it is *naturall*, therefore it is unwearied and restless, as light bodies are not wearied in their motion upwards, nor heavy bodies in their motion downwards, nor a streame in its running to the Sea, because it is *naturall*: Hence it is that the *old man* is never tired in the *workes of the flesh*, nor never drawne dry. When men cannot act sinne, yet they will love sinne, and act it over againe by pleasing thoughts
- of

of it, and by finfull speculation suck out the delight of sinne; and are grieved, not for their sinne, but because they want strength and opportunity to commit it; If sinne would not leave them, they would never leave sinne. This corruption of our nature is not wrought in us by reason and perswasions, for then it might be satisfied with reasons, but it is in us by way of a naturall *inclination*, as iron is carried to the Loadstone; And till our natures be altered, no reason will long prevaile, but our finfull disposition as a streame stoppt for a little while, will breake out with greater violence. 3. Being *naturall* it needs no helpe, as the earth needs no tillage to bring forth weeds. When our corrupt nature is caried contrary to that which is good, it is caried of it selfe. As when Satan *lies* or *murthers*, it comes from his owne cursed nature; and though Satan joyneth with our *corrupt nature*, yet the pronenesse to sinne and the consent unto it, is of our selves.

3.

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But

Cap. 12.

§. 3.

Quest.

But how shall wee know, that Satan joynes with our nature, in those actions unto which nature it selfe is prone?

Answ.

Then Satan addes his helpe, when our nature is carried more eagerly then ordinary to sinne; as when a streame runs violently, wee may know that there is not onely the tide, but the winde that carrieth it.

So in sudden and violent rebellions, it is Satan that pusheth on *nature* left to it selfe of God. A stone falls downward by its owne weight, but if it falls very swiftly, wee know it is throwne downe by an outward mover. Though there were no Devill, yet our corrupt *nature* would act Satans part against it selfe, it would have a supply of wickednesse, (as a Serpent doth poyson) from it selfe, it hath a spring to feed it.

But that man whilest hee lives *here* is not altogether excluded from hope of happinesse, and hath a *nature* not so large and capable of sinne as *Satans*; whereupon hee is not so obstinate in hating

*Nemo se
palpet de
suo, Satan
est, etc.
Aug.*

hating God, and working mischief as hee, &c. Otherwise there is for *kinde* the same *curst* disposition, and *malice* of nature against true goodnes in man, which is in the *devils* and damned spirits themselves.

It is no mitigation of sinne, to plead it is *naturall*, for naturall diseases (as leprosies) that are derived from Parents, are most dangerous, and least curable; Neither is this any excuse, for because as it is *naturall*, so it is *voluntary*, not onely in *Adam*, in whose loines we were, and therefore sinned; but likewise in regard of *our selves*, who are so far from stopping the course of sinne either in our selves or others, that wee feed and strengthen it, or at least give more way to it, and provide lesse against it than we should, untill we come under the government of grace; and by that meanes, we justify *Adams* sinne, and that corrupt estate that followeth upon it, and shew, that if *wee* had beene in *Adams* condition our selves, *wee* would have made that ill choice which he made. And though

Cap. 12.

*Suspicionem
ligatus, non
ferro aliquo,
sed mea fer-
rea voluntate,
vellet meum
tenebat ini-
micus et
inde mihi
pacem se-
cerit. Aug.
Confess.*

*Quicquid
sibi impera-
vit animus,
obtinuit.
Seneca.*

this corruption of our nature be neces-
sary to us, yet it is no violent necessity
from an outward cause, but a necessity
that we willingly pull upon our selves,
and therefore ought the more to hum-
ble us; for the more necessarily we sin,
the more voluntarily, and the more vo-
luntarily, the more necessarily; the will
putting it selfe voluntarily into these
fettlers of sinne. *Necessity* is no plea,
when the *will* is the immediate cause of
any action; Mens hearts tell them they
might rule their *desires* if they would;
For tell a man of any *dish* which he
liketh, that there is poyson in it, and he
will not meddle with it; So tell him
that *death* is in that *sinne* which he is
about to commit, and he will *abstaine*
if he beleewe it be so; if hee beleewe
it not, it is his *voluntary* unbeleeve and
atheisme.

If the will would use that soveraign-
ty it should, and could at the first, wee
should be altogether freed from this
necessity. Men are not damned because
they *cannot* doe better, but because they
will doe no better; If there were no *will*
there

there would be no hell; For men *willingly* submit to the rule and law of sin, they plead for it, and like it so well, as they hate nothing so much as that which any way withstandeth those lawlesse lawes.

Those that thinke it their happinesse to doe what they will, that they might be *free*, crosse their owne desires, for this is the way to make them most perfect *slaves*. When our will is the next immediate cause of sinne, and our consciences beare witnessse to us that it is so; then conscience is ready to take Gods part in accusing our selves: Our consciences tell us to our faces that wee might doe more than we doe to hinder sinne; and that when we sinne, it is not through weaknesse, but out of the wickednesse of our nature.

Our Consciences tell us that we sinne not onely willingly, but often with delight, (so farre forth as wee are not subdued by grace, or awed by something above us,) and that we esteeme any restraint to be our misery. And where by grace the *will* is strengthened,

Cap. 12.

Cesset voluntas propria et non eris infernus.

Cap. 13.

thened, so, that it yeelds not a full consent, yet a gracious soule is humbled even for the sudden risings of corruption that prevent deliberation. As here *David*, though he withstood the risings of his heart, yet he was troubled, that he had so vile a heart that would rise up against God, and therefore takes it downe. Who is there that hath not cause to be humbled, not only for his corruption, but that he doth not *resist* it with that strength, nor labour to prevent it with that diligence, which his heart tels him he might?

Ephc. 3. 18

We cannot have too deepe apprehensions of this *breeding* sinne, the *mother* and nurse of all abominations, for the more we consider the height, the depth, the breadth and length of it, the more shall we be humbled in our selves, and magnifie the *height*, the *depth*, the *breadth*, and the *length* of Gods mercy in CHRIST. The favourers of *nature* are alwayes the enemies of *grace*; This which some thinke and speake so weakly and faintly of, is a worse enemy to us than the devill himselfe,

himselfe; a more neete, a more rest-
 lesse, a more traiterous enemy, for by
 intelligence with it the Devill doth us
 all the hurt hee doth, and by it main-
 taines forts in us against goodnesse.
 This is that which either by discour-
 agement or contrariety hinders us
from good: or else by deadnesse, tedi-
 ousnesse, distractions, or corrupt aimes
 hinders us *in doing* good, this putteth
 us on to evill, and abuseth what is good
in us, or *from us*, to cover or colour
 sinne; and furnishes us with reasons
 either to maintaine what is evill, or
 shifts to translate it upon false causes,
 or fences to arme us against whatso-
 ever shall oppose us in our wicked
 wayes: Though it neither can nor will
 be good, yet it would bee thought to
 be so by others, and enforces a conceit
 upon it selfe that it is good. It impri-
 sons and keeps downe all *light* that
 may discover it, both within it selfe,
 and without it selfe, if it lie in its power.
 It flatters it selfe, and would have all
 the world flatter it too, which if it
 doth nor, it trets; especially if it bee
 once

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once discovered and crossed; hence comes all the plotting against goodnesse, that sinne may reigne without controule. Is it not a lamentable case that man, who out of the very principles of nature cannot but desire happinesse and abhorre misery, yet should bee in love with eternall misery in the causes of it, and abhorre happinesse in the wayes that leade unto it? This sheweth us what a wonderfull deordination and disorder is brought upon mans nature; For every other creature is naturally carried to that which is helpfull unto it, and shunneth that which is any way hurtfull and offensive; Onely man is in love with his owne bane, and fights for those lusts that fight against his soule.

§. 4.

Sixefold
duty in re-
spect of
naturall
corruption

I.

Our duty is, 1. to labour to see this sinfull disposition of ours, not onely as it is discovered in the Scriptures, but as it discovers it selfe in our owne hearts; this must bee done by the light and teaching of Gods Spirit, who knowes

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knows us and all the turnings and windings and by-ways of our soules, better than we know our selves. Wee must see it as the most odious and lothsome thing in the world, making our *natures* contrary to Gods pure nature, and of all other duties making us most indisposed to *spirituall* duties, wherein wee should have neereft communion with God; because it seizeth on the very spirits of our mindes.

2. Wee should looke upon it, as worse than any of those filthy streames that come from it, nay than all the impure issues of our lives together; there is more fire in the fornace then in the sparkles; There is more poyson in the *root* than in all the branches; for if the streame were stopt, and the branches cut off, and the sparkles quenched, yet there would bee a perpetuall supply; as in good things, the cause is better than the effect; so in ill things the cause is worse. Every fruit should make this poysonfull *root* more hatefull to us, and the root should make us hate the *fruit* more, as comming from so bad a root,

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Evils of
not bewail-
ling our
corrupt
nature.

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as being worse in the cause, than in it selfe; the *affection* is worse than the *action*, which may be forced or counterfeited. Wee cry out upon particular sinnes, but are not humbled as wee should be for our impure dispositions; Without the sight of which there can be no *sound repentance* arising from the deepe and through consideration of sin: no desire to bee *new moulded*, without which we can never enter into so holy a place as heaven; no *selfe-deniall* till wee see the best things in us are enmity against God; no high prizing of Christ, without who our natures, our persons, and our actions are abominable in Gods sight; nor any sollid peace setled in the soule; which peace ariseth not from the ignorance of our corruption, or compounding with it, but from sight and hatred of it, and strength against it.

3. Consider the *spiritualnesse* and large *extent* of the *law* of God, together with the curse annexed, which forbids not onely particular sinnes, but *all* the kindes, degrees, occasions, and furtherances of *sinne* in the whole breadth and

and depth of it, and our very *nature* it selfe so farre as it is corrupted; For want of which, we see many *alive without the Law*, joviall and merry from ignorance of their misery, who if they did but once see their natures and lives in *that glasse*, it would take away that liveliness and courage from them, and make them vile in their owne eyes; Men usually *looke* themselves in the lawes of the *State* wherein they live, and think themselves good enough, if they are free from the danger of *penall Statutes*; *this glasse* discovers *only* soule spots, grosse scandalls, and breakings out: Or else they judge of themselves by *parts of nature*, or common *grace*, or by outward conformity to *Religion*, or else by that light they have to guide themselves in the affaires of this life, by their faire and civill carriage, &c. and thereupon *live* and *die* without any sense of the *power of godlinesse*, which begins in the right knowledge of *our selves*, and ends in the right knowledge of God. The *spiritualnesse* and *purity* of the *law* should teach us to consider
the

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Rom. 7. 2.

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Iob 42.6.

the purity and holinesse of God; the bringing of our soules into whose presence will make us to *abhorre our selves* (with *Iob*) *in dust and ashes*; contraries are best seene by setting one neare the other; Whilest we looke onely on our selves, and upon others amongst whom we live, we think our selves to be somebody. It is an evidence of some sincerity wrought in the soule, not to shunne that light which may let us see the foule corners of our hearts and lives.

4.

4. The consideration of this likewise should enforce us to carry a double *guard* over our soules. *David* was very watchfull, yet we see here he was surprized unawares by the sudden rebellion of his heart; we should observe our hearts as governours doe rebells and mutinous persons: Observation awesthe heart; We see to what an excessse sinne groweth in those that deny themselves nothing, nor will be denied in any thing; who if they may doe what they will, will doe what they may; who turne *liberty* into licence, and make all their abilities and advantages

to

to doe good, contributory to the commands of over-ruling and unruly lusts.

Were it not that God partly by his power suppresseth, and partly by his grace subdueth the disorders of mans nature for the good of society, and the gathering of a Church upon earth; *Corruption* would swell to that excesse, that it would over-turne and confound all things together with it selfe. Although there bee a *common corruption* that cleaves to the nature of all men in generall, as men, (as *distrust* in God, *selfe-love*, a carnall and *worldly disposition*, &c.) yet God so ordereth it, that in some there is an *ebbe* and decrease, in others (God justly leaving them to themselves) a *flow* and encrease of sinfulnessse, even beyond the bounds of ordinary corruption, whereby they become worse than themselves, either like beasts in sensuality, or like devills in spirituall wickednesse; though all be blinde in spirituall things, yet some are more *blinded*: though all be hard hearted, yet some are more *bardened*: though all be corrupt in evill courses, yet some

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are

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are more *corrupted*: and sinke deeper into rebellion than others.

Sometimes God suffers this corruption to breake out in *civill* men, yea, even in his *owne* children, that they may know themselves the better, and because *sometimes* corruption is weakened not onely by smothering, but by having a vent, whereupon *grace* stirres up in the soule a *fresh* hatred and revenge against it; and lets us see a necessity of having *whole* Christ, not onely to pardon sinne, but to purge and cleanse our sinfull natures. But yet that which is ill in it selfe, must not be done for the good that comes by it by accident; this must be a comfort after our surprisalls, not an encouragement before.

Cauti^{on}

5.

5. And because the *divine nature*, wrought in us by *divine truth*, together with the *Spirit of God*, is the onely counter-poyson against all sinne, and whatsoever is contrary to God in us, therefore wee should labour that the truth of God may bee grafted in our hearts, that so all the powers of our
soules

soules may relish of it, that there may bee a sweet agreement betwixt the soule and all things that are spirituall, that truth being ingrafted in our hearts, wee may be ingrafted into Christ, and grow up in him, and put him on more and more, and be changed into his likeness. Nothing in heaven or earth will worke out corruption and change our dispositions but the *Spirit* of Christ, clothing divine truths with a divine power to this purpose.

6. When corruption rises pray it downe, as *S. Paul* did, and to strengthen thy prayer, claime the promise of the new covenant, that God would *circumcise our hearts*, and wash us with clean water, that hee would write his law in our hearts, and give us his holy Spirit when we begge it; And looke upon Christ as a publike fountaine open for *Iudah* and *Ierusalem* to wash in.

6.
1 Cor. 13. 8

Ezek. 36.
25, 27.

Zach. 13. 1

Herein consists our comfort; 1. that Christ hath all fulnesse for us, and that our nature is perfect in him; 2. That Christ in our nature hath satisfied divine justice, not onely for the sinne of

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3.

our *lives*, but for the sinne of our nature. And 3. that hee will never give over untill by his Spirit hee hath made *our nature* holy and pure as his owne, till hee hath taken away not onely the reigne, but the very life and being of sinne out of our hearts. 4. That to this end he leaves his Spirit and truth in the Church to the end of the world, that the seed of the Spirit may subdue the *seed of the serpent* in us, and that the Spirit may be a never-failing spring of all holy thoughts, desires, and endeavours in us, and dry up the contrary issue and spring of corrupt nature.

4.

And Christians must remember when they are much annoyed with their corruptions, that it is not their particular case alone, but the condition of all Gods people, lest they bee discouraged by looking on the ugly deformed visage of old *Adam*: which affrighteth some so farre, that it makes them thinke, *No mans nature is so vile as theirs*; which were well if it tended to humiliation onely; but Satan often abuseth it towards discouragement and despe.

desperation. Many out of a misconceit thinke that corruption is greatest when they feele it most, whereas indeed, the lesse wee see it and lament it, the more it is. Sighes and groanes of the soule are like the *pores* of the body, out of which in diseased persons *sick humours* breake forth, and so become lesse. The more we see and grieve for *pride*, which is an immediate issue of our corrupted nature, the lesse it is, because we see it by a contrary grace; the more *sight* the more hatred, the more *hatred* of sinne the more love of grace, and the more *love* the more life, which the more lively it is, the more it is sensible of the contrary: upon every discovery and conflict corruption loses some ground, and Grace gaines upon it.

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CAP. XIII.

Of Imagination, sinne of it, and remedies for it.

§. I.

Sinfulnes
and vanity
seared in
the *imagi-*
nation is a
cause of
much dis-
quiet.

ANd amongst all the *faculties* of the soule, Most of the *disquiet* and unnecessary trouble of our lives arises from the *vanity*, and ill government of that power of the soule, which we call *imagination* and *opinion*, bordering betweene the senses and our understanding; which is nothing else but a shallow apprehension of *good* or *evill* taken from the *senses*: Now because *outward* good or *evill* things agree or disagree to the senses, and the life of *sense* is in us before the use of *reason*, and the delights of sense are *present*, and pleasing, and *sutable* to our natures: thereupon the *imagination* setteth a great price upon sensible good things; and the judgement it selfe since *the fall*, untill it hath an higher light and strength, yeeldeth to our *imagination*; hence it comes
to

to passe that the *best things*, if they bee attended with sensible inconveniences, as *want*, *disgrace* in the world, and such like, are misjudged for *evill things*; and the very worst things, if they bee attended with respect in the world, and *sensible contentments*, are *imagined* to bee the greatest good: which appears not so much in mens *words* (because they are ashamed to discover their *hidden* folly and atheisme) but the *lives* of people speake as much, in that particular choise which they make; Many there are who thinke it not onely a *vaine* but a *dangerous* thing to *serve* God, and a *base* thing to bee *awed* with *religious* respects, they count the waies that Gods people take, no better than *madnesse*; and that course which God takes in bringing men to heaven by a plaine publishing of *heavenly truths*, to bee nothing but *foolishnesse*, and those people that regard it, are esteemed (as the *Pharisees* esteemed them that heard Christ) ignorant, base, and despicable persons; Hence arise all those false *prejudices* against the waies of holinesse,

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Act. 28, 22

as they in the *Acts* were *shy* in entertaining the *truth*, because it was a way *every where spoken against*. The doctrine of the *Crosse*, hath the *crosse* alwaies following it, which *imagination* counteth the most odious and bitter thing in the world.

This *imagination* of ours is become the seat of vanity, and thereupon of vexation to us, because it apprehends a greater happinesse in outward good things then there is, and a greater *miserie* in outward *evill* things then indeed there is, and when experience shewes us that there is not *that good* in those things which wee imagine to bee, but contrarily, we finde much *evill* in them which wee never expected, hereupon the soule cannot but be troubled. The life of many men, and those not the meanest, is almost nothing else but a *fancie*; that which chiefly sets their wits a worke, and takes up most of their time, is how to please their owne *imagination*, which setteth up an *excellency* within it selfe, in comparison of which it despiseth all *true excellency*, and those things

things that are of most necessary consequence indeed. Hence springs *ambition*; and the *vaine* of being great in the word; hence comes an unmeasurable desire of *abounding* in those things which the world esteemes highly of, there is in us *naturally* a competition and desire of being *equall* or *above* others, in that which is generally thought to make us happy and esteemed amongst men; if wee bee not the *only* men, yet wee will be *some body* in the world, some thing wee will have to bee highly *esteemed* for, wherein if we bee *crossed*, we count it the greatest misery that can befall us.

And which is worse, a corrupt desire of being great in the *opinion* of others, creeps into the *profession* of religion, if we live in those places wherein it brings credit or gaine; men will sacrifice their very lives for *vaine* glory: It is an evidence a man lives more to *opinion* and *reputation* of others, than to *Conscience*, when his griefe is more for being disappointed of that *approbation* which hee expects from men, than

for

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Dan. 3. 6.

How sin-
full *imagi-
nations* work
upon the
soule.

for his miscarriage towards God. It marres all in *Religion*, when wee goe about heavenly things with earthly affections, and seeke not CHRIST in Christ, but the world: What is Popery but an artificiall frame of *mans braine* to please mens *imagination*s by outward state and pomp of *Ceremonies*, like that golden image of *Nebuchadnezzar*, wherein hee pleased himselfe so, that to have uniformity in worshipping the same, hee compelled all under paine of death to fall downe before it; this makes *superstitious* persons alwaies cruell, because superstitious devises are the brats of our owne imagination, which we strive for more than for the purity of Gods worship; hence it is likewise that superstitious persons are restless (as the woman of *Samarita*) in their owne spirits, as having no botome, but *fancy* in stead of *faith*.

§. 2.

Now the reason why *imagination* workes so upon the soule, is, because it stirres up the *affections* answerable to the

the good or ill which it apprehends, and our affections stirre the humors of the body, so that oftentimes both our soules and bodies are *troubled* hereby.

Things worke upon the soule in this order. 1. Some object is presented. 2. Then it is apprehended by *imagination* as good and pleasing, or as evill and hurtfull. 3. If *good*, the desire is carried to it with delight: if *evill*, it is rejected with distast, and so our *affections* are stirred up sutably to our apprehension of the object. 4. *Affections* stirre up the *spirits*. 5. The *spirits* raise the *humours*, and so the whole man becomes *moved*, and oftentimes distempered; this falleth out by reason of the *Sympathy* betweene the *soule* and *body*, whereby what offendeth one, redoundeth to the hurt of the other.

And wee see *conceited* troubles have the same effect upon us, as *true*, *Iacob* was as much troubled with the *imagination* of his *sonnes death*, as if hee had beene dead indeed; *imagination* though it bee an empy windy thing, yet it hath *reall* effects. *Superstitious* persons

Capl. 19.

Mat. 15. 9.

Elsy 1. 12.

sons are as much troubled for neglecting any *voluntary* service of *mans* invention, as if they had offended against the direct *commandement* of God : thus *superstition* breeds false feares, and *false* feare brings *true* vexation ; it transformes God to an Idoll, imagining him to be pleased with whatsoever pleases our selves, when as wee take it ill that those who are under *us* should take direction from themselves, and not from us, in that which may content us. *Superstition* is very busie, but all in vaine, *in vaine they worship me* saith God ; and how can it choose but vex and disquiet men, when they shall take a great deale of paines in vaine, and which is worse, to displease most in that where in they thinke to please most. God blasteth all devised service with one demand, *Who required these things at your hands ?* It were better for us to aske our selves this question before hand, *Who required this ? Why doe wee trouble our selves about that which we shal have no thanke for ?* Wee should not bring God downe to our owne imaginations,

nations, but raise our imaginations up to God.

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Now *imagination* hurteth us, 1. By false representations. 2. By preventing *reason*, and so usurping a censure of things, before our *judgements* try them, whereas the office of *imagination* is to minister matter to our *understanding* to worke upon, and not to leade it, much lesse misleade it in any thing. 3. By forging matter out of it selfe without *ground*; the *imaginari* grievances of our lives are more than the *reall*. 4. As it is an ill instrument of the understanding to devise *vanity* and *mischiefe*.

§. 3.

The way to cure this malady in us, is, 1. To labour to bring these *risings* of our soules into the obedience of Gods truth and Spirit; for *imagination* of it selfe, *if ungoverned*, is a *wilde*, and a *ranging* thing; it wrongs not onely the frame of Gods worke in us, setting the *baser* part of a man above the *higher*, but it wrongs likewise the worke

The first
remedy for
hurtfull
imagination
tions.

1 Cor. 10. 5

of

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of God in the creatures and every thing else, for it shapes things as *it selfe* pleaseth, it maketh *evill* good, if it pleaseth the senses; and *good* evill, if it bee dangerous and distastfull to the outward man; which cannot but breed an unquiet and an unsettled soule. As if it were a god, it *can tell* good and evill at its pleasure, it sets up and puls downe the price of what it listeth: By reason of the *distemper* of imagination, the life of many is little else but a *dream*; Many *good* men are in a long dreame of misery, and many *bad* men in as long a dreame of happinesse, till the time of *awaking* come, and all because they are too much led by *appearances*; and as in a *dreame* men are deluded with false joyes, and false feares: So here; which cannot but breed an unquiet and an unsettled soule: therefore it is necessary that God by his *Word* and *Spirit* should erect a government in our hearts to *captive* and order this licentious faculty.

2.

2. Likewise it is good to present *reall* things to the soule, as the *true* riches.

riches, and *true* misery of a Christian, the *true* honour and dishonour, *true* beauty and deformity, the *true* noblesse and debasement of the soule; Whatever is in the world, are but *shadows* of things in comparison of those *true realities* which Religion affords; and why should wee vex our selves about a *vaine shadow*?

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Psal. 39. 6.

The Holy Ghost to prevent further mischief by these outward things, gives a dangerous report of them, calling them *vanity*, *unrighteous Mammon*, *uncertaine riches*, *thornes*, yea *nothing*; because though they be not so in themselves, yet, our *imagination* over-valuing them, they prove so to us upon triall; Now knowledge that is bought by *triall* is often deare bought, and therefore God would have us prevent this by a right *conceit* of things before hand, lest trusting to *vanity* wee *vanish* our selves, and trusting to *nothing* wee become *nothing* our selves, and which is worse, *worse* than *nothing*.

Luk. 15. 9.
Pro. 23. 5.

3. Oppose serious *consideration* against vaine *imagination*, and because

3.

OUR

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our imagination is prone to raise false *objects*, and thereby false *conceits*, and *discourses* in us ; Our best way herein is to propound *true* objects for the minde to worke upon ; as, 1. to consider the greatnesse and goodnesse of Almighty God, and his *love* to us in Christ. 2. The joyes of heaven, and the torments of hell. 3. The last and strict *day of account*. 4. The vanity of all earthly things. 5. The uncertainty of our lives, &c. From the meditation of these truths, the soule wil be prepared to have *right* conceits of things, and to discourse upon true grounds of them, and thinke with it selfe, that if these things be so *indeed*, then I must frame my life sutable to these principles ; hence arise *true affections* in the soule, true *fear* of God, true *love* and desire after the best things, &c. The way to expell *wind* out of our bodies, is to take some wholesome nourishment, and the way to expell *windy fancies* from the soule, is to feed upon serious truths.

4. Moreover, to the well ordering of this unruly *faculty*, it is necessary that

that our nature it selfe should bee changed, for as men are so they imagine, as the *treasure of the heart is*, such is that which comes from it. An *evil heart* cannot *thinke* well: before the heart be changed, our judgement is *depraved* in regard of our *last end*, we seeke our *happinesse* where it is not to be found, *Wickednesse* comes from the *wicked* as the Proverbe is. If we had as large and as quicke *apprehensions* as *Satan* himselfe, yet if the *rellish* of our will and *affecti- ons* be not *changed*, they wil set the *ima- gination* a worke, to devise satisfaction to themselves. For there is a *mutuall working* and *reflux* betwixt the *will* and the *imagination*; the *imagination* stirres up the *will*, and as the *will* is af- fected, so *imagination* worketh.

When the *Law* of God by the *Spirit* is so *written in our hearts*, that the *law* and our *hearts* become agreeable one to the other, then the soule is enclined and made pliable to every good thought: When the heart is once *tanght of God* to love, it is the nature of this *sweet affection* (as the *Apostle* saith) to

O

thinke

Cap. 13.

Mat. 11.

354
Mala. 1. 10
mala. 1. 10

1. Satt. 14.

334

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1 Cor. 13. 5

Mat. 22. 37.

27.

2 King. 2.

10.

Esay 59. 5.

Gen. 6. 5.

thinke no evill either of God or man, and not onely so, but it carries the bent of the whole soule with it to good, so that we love God not onely with all our heart, but with all our minde, that is, both with our understanding & imagination. Love is an affection full of inventions, and sets the wit a worke to devise good things; therefore our chiefe care should bee, that our hearts may bee circumcised and purified so, as they may bee filled with the love of God, and then we shall finde this duty not onely easie but delightfull unto us. The Prophet healed the waters by casting salt into the spring, so the seasoning of the spring of our actions seasons all. And indeed what can bee expected from man whilest hee is vanity, but vaine imaginations? What can we looke for from a Viper but posson? A man naturally is either weaving spiders webbs, or hatching Cockatrice egges, that is, his heart is exercised either in vanity or mischief, for not onely the frame of the heart, but what the heart frameth is evill continually. A wicked man that is besotted with false conceits, will admit

of

of no good thoughts to enter.

5. Even when we are *good* and do
 use good things, yet there is still some
 sicknesse of *fancy* remaining in the best
 of us, whereby wee worke trouble to
 our selves, and therefore it is necessary
 we should labour to *restrain* and *limit*
 our *fancie*, and *stop these waters* at the
beginning, giving no not the least way
 thereunto. If it begins to grow, *man-*
tion, tame the wildnesse of it by fastning
 it to the *Crosse* of Christ, *whom we have*
pierced with our sinnes, and amongst o-
 ther, with these *sinnes* of our *sprits*,
 who hath *redeemed* us from our *vaine*
 thoughts and *conversations*; set before
 it the *consideration* of the wrath of God,
 of death, and judgement, and the woe-
 full estate of the damned, &c. and take
 it not off till thy heart bee taken off
 from straying from God; When it be-
 gins once to runne out to *impertinen-*
cies, *confine* it to some certaine thing,
 and then upon examination wee shall
 finde it bring home some *boley* with it;
 otherwise it will bring us nothing but
 a *sting* from the bitter remembrance of

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5.

Zec. 13. 16

1 Pet. 1. 13

Ierem. 23.

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Luk. 19.
47.

our former mis-spent thoughts & time, which wee should *redeeme* and fill up, with things that most *belong to our peace*. *Idleneſſe* is the houre of *temptation*, wherein Satan joynes with our *imagi- nation*, and ſets it about his owne work, to grind his greeſe: for the ſoule as a Mill either grinds that which is put in- to it; or elſe works upon it ſelfe. *Imagi- nation*, is the *firſt wheele* of the ſoule, and if that move amiſſe, it ſtirres all the *in- ferious wheeles* amiſſe with it; It ſtirres it *ſelfe*, and other powers of the ſoule are ſtirred by its motion; and there- fore the well ordering of *this* is of the greater conſequence; For as the *imagi- nation* conceiveth, ſouſually the *judge- ment* concludeth, the *will* chuſeth, the *affections* are carried, and the *members* execute.

If it breake looſe (as it will ſoone runne riot) yet give no conſent of the *will* to it; though it hath deſiled the *memory*, yet let it not deſile the *will*; though it be the *firſt borne* of the ſoule, yet let it not as *Reuben* aſcend unto the *fathers bed*, that is, our *will*; and deſile that

Bernard.

that which should be kept pure for the Spirit of Christ; resolve to set nothing upon it; but crosse it before it moves to the execution and practice of any thing: As in sicknesse, many times wee imagine (by reason of the corruption of our taste) Physick to be ill for us, and those meates which nourish the disease to be good, yet care of health makes us crosse our owne conceits, and take that which fancie abhorres: So if we would preserve sound spirits, wee must conclude against groundlesse imagination, and resolve that whatsoever it suggests cannot bee so, because it crosses the grounds both of Religion and reason: And when we finde imagination to deceive us in sensible things (as Melancholy persons are subject to mistake) wee may well gather, that it will much more deceive us in our spirituall condition; And indeed such is the incoherence, impertinencie, and unreasonablenesse of imagination, that men are oft ashamed and angry with themselves afterwards for giving the least way to such thoughts; and it is good to chastise

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the soule for the same, that it may bee more *way* for time to come; whilst men are led with *imaginatiu*, they worke not according to right rules prescribed to men, but as other baser creatures, in whom *phantasie* is the chiefe ruling power, and therefore *those* whose *will* is guided by their *fancies*, live more like beasts than men.

Wee allow a horse to prauince and skip in a *pasture*, which if hee doth when he is once backed by the rider, wee count him an *unruly* and an *unbroken* jade; so how forget in other creatures we allow *liberty* of *fancy*; yet, we allow it not in man to frisk and rove at its pleasure, because in him it is to bee bridled with *reason*.

6.

6. Especially take heed of those cursed *imaginatiu*s, out of which as of mother *roots* others spring forth; as questioning *Gods Providence*, and care of his children, his *justice*, his disregarding of what is done here below, &c. *thoughts* of putting off our amendment for time to come, and so *blessing* our *soules* in an evill way; *thoughts* against the

the necessity of exact and circumspect walking with God, &c. When these and such like principles of Satans and the fleshes divinity take place in our hearts, they block up the soule against the entrance of soule-saving truths, and taint our whole conversation, which is either good or evil, as the principles are by which wee are guided, and as our imagination is, which lets in all to the soule.

The Jews in Jeremies time were fore-stalled with vaine imaginations against sound repentance, and therefore his counsell is, Wash shine heart O Ierusalem; how long shall vaine thoughts lodge within thee?

7. Fancie will the better be kept within its due bounds, if wee consider the principall use thereof; Sense and imagination is properly to judge what is comfortable or uncomfortable, what is pleasing or displeasing to the outward man, (not what is morally or spiritually good or ill) and thus farre by the lawes of nature and civility wee are bound to give fancy contentment both

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Eph. 5. 15

Ier. 4. 14.

7.

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Phil. 4. 3.

in our selves and others, as not to speake or doe any thing uncomely, which may occasion a loathing or distast in our converse with men: and it is a matter of conscience to make our lives as comfortable as may bee; as wee are bound to love, so wee are bound to use all helps that may make us lovely, and in-deare us into the good affections of others: As wee are bound to give no offence to the conscience of another, so to no power or faculty either of the outward or inward man of another: Some are taken off in their affection by a favour, whereof they can give but little reason; and some are more carelesse in giving offence in this kinde, than stands with that Christian circumspection and mutuall respect which wee owe one to another; The Apostles rule is of large extent, *Whatsoever things are not only true, and honest, and just, but whatsoever things are lovely, and of good report, &c. thinke of these things.* Yet our maine care should bee to manifest our selves rather to mens consciences then to their imaginations.

8. It

8. It should be our wisdom like-
wise to place our selves in the best con-
venience of all outward helps which may
have a kinde working upon our *fancie*;
and to take heed of the contrary, as
time, place, and objects, &c. There be
good *houres*, and good *messengers* of
Gods sending, golden *opportunities*,
wherein God uses to give a meeting to
his children, and *breathes* good thoughts
into them. Even the wisest and holiest
men, (as *David* and *Solomon, &c.*) had
no further safety than they were care-
full of well using all good advantages,
and *sequestering* themselves from such
objects, as had a working power upon
them; by suffering their *fooles* to bee
led by their *fancies*, and their *hearts* to
runne after their *eyes*, they betrayed
and robbed themselves of much grace
and comfort, thereupon *Solomon* cri-
es our with *griefe* and *shame* from his
own experience, *Vanity of vanities, &c.*
Fancy will take fire before wee bee a-
ware. *Little* things are seeds of great
matters; *Iob* knew this, and therefore
made a covenant with his eyes. But a *fooles*

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8.

Eccles. 1. 2

Iob 31. 1.

eyes

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Pro. 17. 24

Prælo
cogitatio.

Peza in
his life.

eyes are in the corners of the earth, saith Solomon.

Sometimes the ministring of some excellent thought from what we heare or see, proves a great advantage of spirituall good to the soule: Whilest Saint Austin out of curiosity delighted to heare the eloquence of St. Ambrose, he was taken with the matter it selfe, sweetly sliding together with the words into his heart. Of later times, whilest Galeaceus Caraccialus an Italian Marquesse, and Nephew to Pope Paul 5. was hearing Peter Martyr reading up on 1 Corinthians, and shewing the deceiverableness of mans judgement in spirituall things, and the efficacy of divine truth in those that belong unto God, and further using a similitude to this purpose; "If a man be walking a farre off, and see people dancing together, "and heare no noise of the musicke, he "judges them fooles and out of their "wits; but when he comes neerer and "heares the musicke, and sees that every motion is exactly done by Art; "Now he changes his minde, and is so
"taken

taken up with the sweet agreement
 of the *gesture* and the *musick*, that
 hee is not onely delighted therewith,
 but desirous to joyne himselfe in the
 number; so it falls out (saith hee)
 with men; Whilest they looke upon
 the outward carriage and conversa-
 tion of Gods people, and see it *diffe-*
ring from others, they thinke them
footes; but when they look more nar-
 rowly into their courses, and see a
 gracious *harmony* betwixt their *lives*
 and the *Word* of God, then they be-
 ginne to be in love with the *beauty of*
holinesse; and joyne in conformity of
 holy obedience with those they scor-
 ned before. This *similitude* wrought
 so with this Noble-man, that he began
 from that time forward to set his minde
 to the study of heavenly things.

One seasonable truth falling upon a prepared heart, hath oftentimes a sweet and strong operation; Luther confesseth that having heard a grave Divine *Staupius* say, that *that is kind repentance which begins from the love of God*, ever after that time the practice

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Chaplin

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*Doctrina
predicatio-
nis incipit
a videribus
christi.*

2 Tim. 1. 9

*Ecclef. 12.
10.*

of repentance was sweeter to him. This speech of his likewise tooke well with Luther; that in doubts of *predes- tination* we should begin from the wounds of Christ; that is, from the sense of Gods love to us in Christ, we should arise to the grace given us in *election* before the world was.

The putting of lively colours upon common truths hath oft a strong working both upon the fancy, and our will and affections: the spirit is refreshed with fresh things, or old truths refreshed; this made the Preacher seek to finde out pleasing and acceptable words; and our Saviour Christs manner of teaching was, by a lively representation to mens fancies, to teach them heavenly truths in an earthly sensible manner; and indeed what doe we see or heare, but will yeeld matter to a holy heart to raise it selfe higher?

Wee should make our fancies serviceable to us in spirituall things, and take advantage by any pleasure, or profit, or honour which it presents our thoughts withall, to thinke thus with our selves,
What

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What is this to the *true* honour, and to those *induring* pleasures, &c. And seeing God hath condescended to represent *heavenly* things to us under *earthly* termes, wee should follow Gods dealing herein: God *represents* heaven to us, under the terme of a *banquet*, and of a *kingdome*, &c. our *union* with CHRIST under the terme of a *marriage*, yea Christ himselfe, under the name of whatsoever is *lovely* or *comfortable* in heaven or earth. So the Lord sets out *Hell* to us by whatsoever is terrible or tormenting. Here is a large field for our imagination to walke in, not onely without *hurt*, but with a great deale of *spirituall* *gaine*; If the wrath of a *King* be as the *roaring* of a *Lion*, what is the wrath of the *King of Kings*? If *fire* be so terrible, what is *hell* *fire*? If a *darke* *dungeon* be so loathsome, what is that *evernall* *dungeon* of *darkenesse*? If a *feast* bee so pleasing, what is the *continuell* *feast* of a *good* *conscience*? If the meeting of *friends* be so comfortable, what will our meeting together in heaven be? The *Scripture* by such like termes

Luk. 10.
32.

Pro. 15. 15

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termes would helpe our *faith* and *fancy* both at once; a sanctified *fancie* will make every creature a *ladder to heaven*. And because childhood and youth are ages of *fancy*; therefore it is a good way to instill into the hearts of children be- times, the *loving* of good; and the *shun- ning* of evill, by such like representati- ons as agree with their *fancies*, as to hate *hell* under the representation of fire and darknesse, &c. Whilest the soule is joyned with the body, it hath not onely a *necessary* but a *holy* use of *imagination*, and of *sensible* things whereupon our imagination worketh; what is the use of the *Sacraments*, but to help our *soules* by our *senses*, and our *faith* by *imagina- tion*; as the soule receives much *hurt* from imagination, so it may have much good thereby.

1 Cor. 1. 9.

But yet it ought not to *invent* or *de- vise* what is good and true in religion, here *fancy* must yeeld to *faith*, and *faith* to divine revelation; the *things* wee be- lieve are such, as *neither eye hath seene, nor eare heard, neither came into the heart of man* by *imagination* stirred up from any

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any thing which we have *seene* or *heard*; they are above not onely *imagination*, but *reason* it selfe, in *men* and *Angels*: But after God hath revealed spirituall truths, and *faith* hath apprehended them, then *imagination* hath use while the soule is joyned with the body, to *colour* divine truths, and make light. somewhat *faith* beleeves; for instance, it doth not *devise* either *heaven* or *hell*, but when God hath revealed them to us, our *fancy* hath a fitnesse of enlarging our conceits of them, even by resemblance from things in nature, and that without danger; because the joyes of heaven, and the torments of hell are so great, that all the representations which nature affords us, fall short of them.

Imagination hath likewise some use in *religion*, by putting *cases* to the soule, as when wee are tempted to any unruly action, we should think with our selves, What would I doe if some holy grave person whom I much reverence should behold me? Whereupon the soule may easily ascend *higher*; God sees me, and

mv

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Ex aliquid
quod ex
magno viro
vel tacente
proficiat.

my owne conscience is ready to witnesse against me, &c.

It helps us also in taking benefit by the example of other men; Good things are best learned by others expressing of them to our view; the very sight often, (nay the very thought) of a good man doth good, as representing to our soules some good thing which wee affect; which makes *Histories* and the lively *Characters* and expressions of *vertues* and *vices* usefull to us. The sight, yea the very reading of the suffering of the *Martyrs* hath wrought such a hatred of that *persecuting* Church, as hath done marvellous good; the sight of justice executed upon malefactors, works a greater hatred of sinne in men than naked precepts can doe; So outward pomp and state in the world, doth further that awefull respect due to *authority*, &c.

9.

Lastly, it would much availle for the well-ordering of our *thoughts*, to set our soules in order every *morning*, and to strengthen and perfume our spirits with some gracious *meditations*, especially

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ally of the chiefe end and scope wherefore we live here, and how every thing wee doe, or befalls us, may bee reduced and ordered to further the maine. The end of a Christian is glorious, and the oft thoughts of it will raise and enlarge the soule, and set it on worke to study how to make all things serviceable thereunto. It is a thing to be lamented, that a Christian borne for heaven, having the price of his high calling set before him, and matters of that weight and excellencie to exercise his heart upon, should bee taken up with trifles, and fill both his head and heart with vanity and nothing, as all earthly things will prove ere long; and yet if many mens thoughts and discourses were distilled, they are so frosty that they would hardly yeeld one drop of true comfort.

§. 4.

Oh but (say some) thoughts and imaginations are free, and we shall not bee accountable for them.

This is a false plea, for God hath a sovereignty over the whole soule, and

p

his

Object.

Answ.

Imaginations and thoughts not free.

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2 Cor. 10.
5.1 Cor. 14.
25.

1.

2.

3.

his *law* bindes the whole *inward* and *outward* man; as wee desire our whole man should bee *saved* by Christ, so we must yeeld up the whole man to bee *governed* by him; and it is the effect of the dispensation of the *Gospel*, accompanied with the *Spirit*, to captivate *whatsoever* is in man unto Christ, and to *bring downe* all *high tawring imaginations* that exalt themselves against Gods *Spirit*. There is a divinity in the Word of God powerfully unfolded, which will convince our soules of the sinfulness of *naturall imaginations*, as we see in the *Ideot* 1 *Corinth.* 14. who seeing himselfe *laid open* before himself, cried out, that *God was in the speaker*.

There ought to be in man a conformity to the truth and goodnesse of things, or else 1. we shall *wrong* our owne soules with false *apprehensions*, and 2. the creature, by putting a fashion upon it otherwise then God hath made, and 3. wee shall wrong GOD himselfe the *Author* of goodnesse, who cannot have his true glory but from a right apprehension of things as they are; what

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what a wrong is it to men when wee shall take up false prejudices against them without ground? and so suffer our *conceits* to bee envenomed against them by unjust *suspitions*, and by this meanes deprive our selves of all that good which we might receive by them; for our *nature* is apt to judge, and accept of things as the *persons* are, and not of persons according to the *things* themselves: this *faculty* exercises a tyranny in the soule, setting up and pulling downe whom it will. *Iob* judged his friends *altogether vain*, because they went upon a vaine *imagination* and *discourse*, judging him to bee an *hypocrisie*, which could not but adde much to his affliction: when men take a toy in their head against a person or place, they are ready to reason as *hee* did, *Can any good come out of Nazareth?*

Iob 27. 12

Ioh. 6. 46.

It is an indignity for men to bee led with *surmises* and *probabilities*, and so to passe a rash judgement upon *persons* and *things*: Oftentimes *falsehood* hath a fairer glosse of probability than *truth*, and *vices* goe masqued under the ap-

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Similitudo
maiestatis
YHWH.

Eph. 4. 22.

1 Tim. 6. 9

pearance of *vertue*, whereupon *seeming* *likenesse* breeds a mistake of one thing for another; And Satan oftentimes casts a mist before our *imagination*, that so wee might have a mishapen conceit of things; by a spirit of *elusion* he makes *worldly* things appeare bigger to us, and *spirituall* things lesser than indeed they are; and so by sophisticating of things, our affections come to be misled. Imagination is the *wombe*, and Satan the *father* of all monstrous *conceptions* and disordered *lusts*, which are well called *deceitfull lusts*, and *lusts of ignorance*, foolish and noysome lusts, because they both spring from errour and folly, and leade unto it.

We see even in *Religion* it selfe, how the *world* (together with the helpe of *the god of the world*) is led away, if not to *worship images*; yet to worship the image of their owne *fancy*; And where the truth is most *professed*, yet people are prone to *fancy* to themselves such a breadth of *Religion*, as will altogether leave them comfortlesse, when things shall appeare in their true colours; they will

will *conceit* to embrace *truth* without hatred of the world, and *Christ* without his *croffe*, and a *godly life* without *persecution*, they would pull a *rose* without *pricks*. Which though it may stand with their owne base ends for a while, yet will not hold out in times of *change*, when sicknesse of body and trouble of minde shall come; *Empty* conceits are too weake to encounter with reall griefes.

Some thinke *Orthodoxe* and right *opinions* to bee a plea for a *loose* life, whereas there is no ill course of life but springs from some false opinion. God will not onely call us to an account how wee have *believed*, *disputed*, and *reasoned*, &c. but how we have *lived*. Our care therefore should bee to build our *profession* not on seeming *appearances*, but upon sound *grounds*, that the gates of hell cannot prevaile against. The hearts of many are so vaine, that they delight to be blowne up with *flattery*, because they would have their *imagination* pleased (yea even when they cannot but know themselves abused,) and

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are grieved to have their *windy* bladder pricked, and so to bee put out of their *conceited* happinesse. Others out of a *tediousnesse* in serious and settled thoughts, entertaine every thing as it is offered to them at the first blush, and suffer their imaginations to carry them presently thereunto without further judging of it: the *will* naturally loves variety and change, and our *imaginati-
on* doth it service herein, as not delighting to fix long upon any thing; hereupon men are contented both in *religion*, & in *common* life to be misled with prejudices upon shallow grounds. Whence it is that the best *things* and *persons* suffer much in the world, the power and practice of Religion is hated under odious names, and so condemned before it is understood; Whence wee see a necessity of getting spirituall *Eye-salve*, for without true *knowledge* the heart cannot be good.

Pro. 19. 2.

It is just with God that those who take *liberty* in their *thoughts*, should bee given up to their *owne imaginations*, to delight in them, and to bee out of conceit

ceit with the best things, and so to reape the fruit of their *owne* waies. Nay, even the best of Gods people, if they take liberty herein, God will let loose their *imagination* upon themselves, and suffer them to bee intangled and vexed with their *owne* hearts; Those that give way to their *imaginings*, shew what their *actions* should be, if they dared; for if they forbear doing evill out of *conscience*, they should as well forbear *imagining* evill; for *both* are alike *open* to God and hatefull to him; and therefore oft where there is no conscience of the *thought*, God gives men up to the *deed*. The greatest, and hardest worke of a Christian is least in sight, which is the well ordering of his *heart*; some buildings have most workmanship under ground, it is our spirits that God who is a Spirit hath most communion withall; and the lesse freedome wee take to sinne here, the more argument of our sincerity, because there is no *lawes* to binde the inner man but the law of the Spirit of grace, whereby wee are a law to our
P 4 selves,

Ioh. 4.24.

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selves. A good Christian begins his repentance where his sinne begins, *in his thoughts*, which are the next issue of his heart. God counts it an honour when wee regard his *all seeing eye* so much, as that wee will not take liberty to our selves in that which is offensive to him, no not in our *hearts*; wherein no creature can hinder us. It is an argument that the *Spirits* hath set up a *kingdome* and order in our hearts, when our spirits rise within us against any thing that lifts it selfe up against goodnesse.

Object.

Many flatter themselves, from an impossibility of ruling their *imaginations*, and are ready to lay all upon *infirmity* and *naturall weaknesse*, &c.

Answ.

Not impossible to rule the imagination, and how.

But such must know that if wee bee sound Christians, the *Spirit* of God will enable us to doe all things (Evangellycally) that wee are *called unto*, if we give way without checke to the motions thereof; where the Spirit is, it is such a *light*, as discovers not onely dunghils, but *motes* themselves, even
light

light and flying imaginations, and abaseth the soule for them, and by degrees purgeth them out; and if they presse (as they are as busie as flies in Summer) yet a good heart will not owne them, nor allow himselfe in them, but casts them off, as hot water doth the scumme, or as the stomacke doth that which is noysome unto it, they finde not that entertainment *here* which they have in carnall hearts, where the scumme soakes in; which are *stewes* of *uncleane* thoughts, *shambles* of *cruell* and *bloody* thoughts, *Exchanges* and *shops* of *vaine* thoughts, a *very forge* and *myn* of *false*, *politick*, and *undermining* thoughts, yea often a little *bell* of *confused* and *blacke* imaginations. There is nothing that more moveth a godly man to renew his likerest every day in the perfect righteousness and obedience of his Saviour, than these finfull *stirrings* of his soule, when hee findes something in himselfe alwayes *inticing* and *drawing* away his heart from God, and intermingling it selfe with his best performances. Even good
thoughts

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thoughts are troublesome if they come *unseasonably*, and weaken our exact performance of duty.

§. 6.

Miscon-
ceits about
imaginati-
on, to be
avoided.

But here some misconceits must be taken heed of.

I.

1. As wee must take heed that wee account not our *imaginations* to be religion; So we must not account *true religion*, and the *power of godlinesse* to bee a matter of *imagination onely*; as if *holy men* troubled themselves more than needs, when they stand upon *religion* and *conscience*, seeking to approve themselves to God in all things, and indeavouring (so farre as frailty will permit) to avoid all appearances of evil. Many men are so serious in *vanities*, and reall in *trifles*, that they count all, which dote not upon such *outward excellencies* as they doe (because the *Spirit of God* hath revealed to them things of a *higher nature*) to bee *fantasticks* and *humorous* people, and so impute the worke of the *Spirit* to the *flesh*, Gods worke to *Satan*; which comes neare unto blasphemy: they

1 Theff. 5.
22.

they *imagine* good men to bee led with vaine *conceits*, but good men *know* them to bee so led. Not onely St. Paul, but CHRIST himselfe, were counted *besides themselves*, when they were earnest for God and the soules of his people. But there is enough in *Religion* to beare up the soule against al *imputations* laid upon it: the true *children of wisdome* are alwayes able to justifie their *Mother*, and the conscionable practice of *holy duties* is founded upon such solid *grounds*, as shall hold out when heaven and earth shall vanish.

Cap. 15.

A. R. 16. 24

Mat. 11.
19.

2. Wee must know that as there is great danger in false *conceits* of the way to heaven, when we make it *broader* than it is, for by this meanes wee are like men going over a bridge, who thinke it broader than it is, but being deceived by some *shadow*, sinke downe, and are suddenly drowned; So men mistaking the strait way to life, and trusting to the *shadow* of their owne *imagination*, fall into the bottomlesse pit of hell before they are aware. In like manner the danger is great in making

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2. 10. 21
1. 1. 01

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Eccl. 7. 17.

king the way to heaven *narrower* than indeed it is, by weake and superstitious *imaginations*, making more sinnes than God hath made. The *Wise mans* counsell is that wee should not make our selves *over wicked*, nor be *foolisher* than *wee are*, by devising more sinnes in our *imagination*, than we are guilty of.

It is good in this respect, to know our *Christian liberty*, which being one of the fruits of Christs death, wee cannot neglect the same, without much wrong not onely to our selves, but to the rich bounty and goodnesse of God. So that the due rules of limitation bee observed, from *authority*, *piety*, *sobriety*, *needlesse offence* of others, &c. we may with better leave use all those *comforts* which God hath given to refresh us in the way to *heaven*, than refuse them; the care of the outward man bindes conscience so farre, as that wee should neglect nothing which may helpe us in a cheerefull serving of God, in our places, and tend to the due honour of our bodies which are the *temples of the Holy Ghost*, and companions with our
soules

1 Cor. 3,
16, 17.

soules in all performances. So that under this pretence wee take not too much liberty to satisfie the lusts of the *body*. Intemperate use of the creatures is the nurse of all passions: because our spirits which are the soules instruments, are hereby inflamed and disturbed; it is no wonder to see an intemperate man transported into any *passion*.

3. Some out of their *high* and *ayery* imaginations, (and out of their *iron* and *stinty* Philosophy) will needs think *outward* good and ill, together with the *affections* of griefe and delight stirred up thereby, to bee but opinions and *conceits* of good and evill onely, not *true* and *really* so founded in *nature*, but taken up of our selves: But though our *fancy* be ready to conceits a greater hurt in *outward* evils than indeed there is (as in *poverty*, *paine of body*, *death of friends*, &c.) yet wee must not deny them to bee *evils*: that *wormewood* is bitter, it is not a conceit onely, but the *nature* of the thing it selfe, yet to abstaine from it altogether for the *bitter-*

nesse

Cap. 13.

ness thereof is a hurtfull conceit. That honey is sweet, it is not a conceit onely, but the naturall quality of it is so; yet out of a taste of the sweetnesse, to thinke we cannot take too much of it, is a misconceit paid home with loathsome bitternesse. Outward good and outward evill, and the affections of delight and sorrow rising thence, are naturally so, and depend not upon our opinion. This were to offer violence to nature, and to take man out of man, as if hee were not flesh but Steele; Universall experience from the sensiblenesse of our nature in any outward grievance, is sufficient to damne this conceit.

The way to comfort a man in griefe, is not to tell him that it is onely a conceit of evill, and no evill indeed that he suffers, this kinde of learning will not downe with him, as being contrary to his present feeling; but the way is, to yeeld unto him that there is cause of grieving, though not of over-grieving, and to shew him grounds of comfort, stronger than the griefe he suffers. We should weigh the degrees of evill in a right

right ballance, and not suffer *fancie* to make them greater than they are; So as that for *obtaining* the greatest outward *good*, or *avoiding* the greatest outward *ill* of *suffering*, wee should give way to the least *evill* of *sinne*. This is but a *policy* of the *flesh*, to take away the *sensiblenesse* of *evill*, that so those *checks* of *conscience* and *repentance* for *sinne*, which is oft occasioned thereby, might be taken away; that so men may goe on enjoying a *stupid* happinesse, never laying any thing to *heart*, nor *afflicting* their *soules*, untill their *consciences* awaken in the place of the *damned*, and then they feelee that *griefe* returne upon them for ever, which they laboured to put away when it might have beene seasonable to them.

§. 7.

I have stood the longer upon this, because *Satan* and his *instruments* by bewitching the *imagination* with false *appearances*, misleadeth not onely the *world*, but troubleth the peace of men *taken out of the world*, whose estate is laid

This a very pertinent doctrine, and why.

Cap. 13.

laid up safe in Christ, who (notwithstanding) passe their few dayes here in an uncomfortable, wearisome, and unnecessary *sadnesse of spirit*, being kept in ignorance of their happy condition by Satans *juggling* and their owne mistakes, and so come to heaven before they are aware. Some againe passe their dayes in a golden *dream*, and drop into *hell* before they thinke of it; but it is farre better to *dream* of *ill*, and when wee awake to finde it but a *dream*, than to *dream* of some great *good*, and when we awake to finde the contrary.

Lesia phantasia.

As the distemper of the *fancie* disturbing the act of reason, oftentimes breeds madnesse in regard of civill conversation; So it breeds likewise *spirituall* madnesse, carrying men to those things, which if they were in their right wits they would utterly abhorre; therefore wee cannot have too much care upon what wee fixe our thoughts; And what a glorious discovery is there of the excellencies of *Religion* that would even ravish an *Angel*, which may raise up, exercise, and fill our hearts?

We

We see our *fancy* hath so great a force in naturall conceptions, that it oft sets a *marke* and *impreſſion* upon that which is *conceiv'd* in the *wombe*. So likewise, ſtrong and *holy* conceits of things (having a *divine* vertue accompanying of them,) transforme the ſoule, and breed ſpirituall impreſſions answerable to our ſpirituall apprehenſions. It would prevent many *crosses*, if we would conceive of things as they are; When *trouble* of minde, or *sickneſſe* of body, and *death* it ſelfe commeth, what will remaine of all that *greatneſſe* which filled our *fancies* before? then we can judge ſoberly, and *ſpeake* gravely of things. The beſt way of happineſſe, is not to *multiply* honours or riches, &c. but to *cure* our conceits of things, and then we cannot be very much caſt downe with any thing befalls us here.

Therefore when any thing is preſented to our ſoules, which wee ſee is ready to worke upon us; Wee ſhould aſke of our ſelves, upon what ground wee entertaine ſuch a conceit, whether wee ſhall have the ſame judgement

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after

Cap. 13.

after we have yeelded to it as now wee have ? and whether wee will have the same judgement of it in *sicknesse* and *death*, and at the day of *reckoning* as we have for the present ? That which is of it selfe evill, is *alwayes* so at one time as well as another ; if the time will come, when wee shall thinke those things to bee vaine, which *now* we are so eagerly set upon, as if there were some great good in them ; Why should wee not thinke so of them *now*, when as the reforming of our judgement may doe us good, rather than to bee led on with a *pleasing* error untill that time, wherein the sight of our error will fill our hearts with horror and shame, without hope of ever changing our condition.

Here therefore is a speciall use of these *Soliloquies*, to awakethe *soule*, and to stirre up *reason* cast asleepe by Satans *charmes*, that so scattering the *cloudes* through which things seeme otherwise then they are, wee may discern and judge of things according to their true and constant nature ; Demand of thy soule, Shall I alwayes bee
of

of this minde? Will not the time come when this will prove bitterneſſe in the end? Shall I redeeme a *ſhort* contentment with *laſting* ſorrow? Is my Judge of my mind? Will not a time come when all things ſhall appeare as they are? Is this according to the rule, &c?

To conclude therefore, whereas there bee divers *principles* of mens actions, as 1. *naturall inclination*, inclining us to ſome courſes more than others, 2. *cuſtome* which is *another nature* in us, 3. *imagination*, apprehending things upon ſhallow grounds; from whence ſprings *affectation*, whereby wee deſire glory in things above our own ſtrength and meaſure, and make ſhew of *that*, the truth whereof is wanting in us, 4. *true judgement*, diſcerning the true reaſons of things, 5. *Faith*, which is a ſpirituall *principle* planted in the ſoule, apprehending things above reaſon, and raiſing us up to conceive of all things as GOD hath diſcovered them. Now a ſound Chriſtian ſhould not bee *lightly* led with thoſe firſt *common* grounds of *naturall inclination, cuſtome, opinion, &c.*

Divers
principles
of mens
actions:

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Cap. 14.

but by judgement inlightned, advanced, and guided by *faith*. And wee must take heed wee suffer not things to passe suddenly from *imagination* to *affection*, without asking advice of our judgement, and *faith* in the way, whose office is, to weigh things in Gods *ballance*, and ther-upon to accept, or refuse them.

CAP. XIV.

Of helpe by others. Of true comforters, and their graces. Method. Ill successe.

§. I.

There is a
help for us
against
troubles in
others.

Pro. 17. 19.

BUt because we are subject to *favour* and *flatter* our selves, it is wisdom to take the benefit of a second selfe, (that is) a well chosen friend *living* or *dead*, (books I meane,) which will speak truly without flattery of our estates. *A friend is made for the time of Adversity, and two are better than one*; for by this meanes our troubles are *divided*, and so more easily borne. The very presence of a true hearted friend yeelds often ease to our griefe. Of all *friends*, those
that

that by office are to speake a word to a weary soule, are most to bee regarded, as speaking to us in Christs stead. Oftentimes (especially in our owne case) wee are blinded and benighted with *passion*, and then the judgement of a friend is clearer. *Living* friends have a three-fold priviledge: 1. Their advice is *sutable*, and fit to our present occasion, they can meet with our *grievance*, so cannot books so well. 2. What comes from a *living* friend, comes *lively*, as helped by his spirit. 3. In regard of our selves, what they say is apprehended with more ease, and lesse plodding and bent of minde; There is scarce any thing wherein wee see God more in favour towards us, than in our *friends*, and their seasonable speeches; our hearts being naturally very *false* and willingly *deceived*. God often gives us up to be misled by men, not according to *his*, but *our owne* naughty hearts. As men *are*, such are their *Counsellours*, for such they *will* have, and such God lets them have. Men whose *wills* are stronger than their *wits*, who are wedded to

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Cap. 14.

1 Sa. 2. 25.

Pro. 14. 14.

Ideo amicus
deest quia
nihil deest.

Prov. 29. 1.

their *owne* wayes, are more pleased to heare that which complies with their *inclinations*, than a harsh truth which crosses them; this presages ruine, because they are not *counsellable*: wherefore GOD suffers them to bee led through a *foales paradise* to a true *prison*, as men that will neither heare themselves nor others who would doe them good against their wills; It was a signe God would destroy *Elies sonnes* when they would heare no *counsell*; GOD *fills* such men with their *owne* wayes. Men in great place often in the abundance of all things else, want the benefit of a *true friend*, because under pretence of *service* of them men carry their *owne ends*; as they flatter *themselves*, so they are flattered by *others*, and so robbed of the true judgement of themselves. Of all spirituall judgements this is the heaviest, for men to bee given up to such a measure of *selfe-willnesse*, as to refuse spirituall *balme* to heale them; usually such *perish without remedy*, because to be *wilfully* miserable is to bee *doubly* miserable, for it
addes

addes to our misery, that we brought it willingly upon our selves.

It is a course that will have a blessing attending it, for *friends* to joine in *league* one to watch over another, and observe each others wayes. It is an usuall course for Christians to joine together in other holy duties, as *hearing*, *receiuing* of the *Sacrament*, *prayer*, &c. but this fruit of holy *communion* which ariseth from a *mutuall* observing one another is much wanting; whence it is that so many *droope*, so many are so *unchearefull* in the wayes of God, and lie groaning under the *burden* of many *cares*, and are battered with so many temptations, &c. because they are left onely to their *owne* spirits. What an unworthy thing is it, that wee should pittie a *beast* over-loaden, and yet take no pittie of a *brother*? whereas there is no living member of Christ but hath *spirituall love* infused into him, and some *ability* to comfort others. *Dead stones* in an *Arch* uphold one another, and shall not *living*? It is the worke of an *Angel* to *comfort*, nay, it is the office

Cap. 14.

of the *Holy Ghost* to be a *Comforter*, not onely immediately, but by breathing comfort into our *hearts*, together with the comfortable *words* of others; thus one friend becomes an *Angell*, nay a *God* to another; and there is a sweet sight of *God* in the face of a *friend*; for though the comfort given by *Gods Messengers*, bee ordinarily most effectually, as the blessing of *Parents* (who are in *Gods roome*) is more effectually than the blessing of others upon their children: yet *God* hath promised a blessing to the offices of *Communion of Saints* performed by one private man towards another. Can we have a greater encouragement than under *God* to be gainer of a *soule*, which is as much in *Gods esteeme* as if wee should gaine a world? *Spirituall almes* are the best almes; *mercy* shewed to the *soules* of men is the greatest *mercy*; and wisdom in winning of *soules* is the greatest wisdom in the world, because the *soule* is especially the man, upon the goodnesse of which, the happinesse of the whole man depends; What shining

ning and flourishing. Christians should wee have if these duties were performed? As wee have a portion in the *Communion of Saints*, so wee should labour to have *humility* to take good, and *wisedome* and *love* to doe good. A Christian should have *feeding* lips, and a *healing* tongue; the *leaves* the very words of the tree of *righteousnesse* have a curing vertue in them.

Some will shew a great deale of *humanity* in comforting others, but little *Christianity*; for as *kinde men* they will utter some *cheerefull words*, but as *Christians* they want *wisedome* from above to speake a *gracious word* in *season*: Nay some there are, who hinder the saving working of any affliction upon the hearts of others, by unseasonable and *unsavoury* discourses, either by suggesting false *remedies*, or else diverting men to false *contentments*, and so become spirituall *traitors* rather than *friends*, taking part with their worst *enemies*, their *lusts* and *wills*. Happy is hee that in his way to heaven meeteth with a chearefull and skilfull *guide* and
fellow-

Cap. 14.

fellow-traveller, that carrieth *cordials* with him against all faintings of spirit: It is a part of our *wisdom* to *salvation* to make choice of such a one as may further us in our *way*; An *indifferency* for any *company* shewes a *dead* heart; where the life of grace is, it is sensible of all advantages and disadvantages: How many have beene refreshed by *one* short, apt, savoury speech? which hath begotten, as it were, new spirits in them.

Iob 2. 12.

Iob 6. 14.

In ancient times (as wee see in the Story of *Iob*) it was the custome of friends to meet together, to comfort those that were in misery, and *Iob* takes it for granted, that *to him that is afflicted* pitty should bee shewed from his friends: for besides the presence of a friend, which hath some influence of comfort in it; 1. The discovery of his *loving affection* hath a cherishing sweetnesse in it. 2. The expression of love in *reall* comforts and services by supplying any outward want of the party troubled, prevails much; thus Christ made way for his comforts to

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the *soules* of men, by shewing outward kindnesse to their *bodies*: Love with the sensible *fruits* of it, prepareth for any wholesome counsell. 3. After this, *wholesome words* carry a speciall cordiall vertue with them, especially when the Spirit of God in the affectionate speaker joines with the *word* of *comfort*, and thereby closeth with the heart of a troubled Patient: when all these concenter and meet together in one, then is comfort *sealed* up to the soule. The childe in *Elixabeths* wombe sprang at the presence and salutation of *Mary*; the speech of one hearty friend cannot but revive the spirits of another; Sympathy hath a strange force, as we see in the strings of an Instrument, which being played upon (as they say) the strings of another Instrument are also moved with it. After love hath once *kindled* love, then the heart being melted, is fit to receive any impression; unlesse *both* pieces of the iron bee red *hot* they will not joine together; *two* spirits warmed with the *same* heat will easily soader together.

Cap. 14.

3.

Luk. 1.41.

Cap. 14.

Graces necessary in dealing with another.

1.

2.

3.

1 Cor. 13. 6

Act. 13. 18

Expositio.

Non est idē
ferre, s. quid
ferendū est,
et probare s.
quid probā-
dum non est.

§. 2.

In him that shall stay the minde of another, there had need to be an excellent *temper* of many graces; as,
1. *Knowledge* of the grievance, together with *wisedome* to speake a word in season, and to conceale that which may set the cure backwards. 2. *Faithfulnessesse* with *liberty*, not to conceale any thing which may bee for his good, though against present liking. The very life and soule of *friendship* stands in *freedom*, tempered with *wisedome* and *faithfulnessesse*. 3. *Love* with compassion and patience *to beare all*, and *hope all*, and *not to bee easily provoked* by the waywardnesse of him wee deale with. Short spirited men are not the best comforters: God himselfe is said *to beare with the manners of his people in the wildernessee*: It is one thing to *beare* with a wise sweet *moderation* that which may bee *borne*, and another thing to *allow* or approve that which is not to be *approved* at all. Where these graces are in the *speaker*, and apprehended

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so to bee by the person *distempered*, his heart will soone embrace whatsoever shall bee spoken to rectifie his *judgement* or *affection*. A good conceit of the *spirit* of the speaker is of as much force to prevaile as his *words*. Words especially prevaile, when they are uttered more from the *bowels* than the braine, and from our owne *experience*, which made even Christ himselſe a more compassionate *high Priest*. When men cometo themselves againe, they will bee the deepest censurers of their owne miscarriage.

§. 3.

Moreover, to the right comforting of an afflicted person, speciall care must be had of discerning the true *ground* of his grievance, the *cause* must bee searched out; if the grieſe arise from outward causes, then it must be carried into the right channell, the course of it must bee turned another way, as in staying of *blood*; we should grieve for sinne in the *first place*, as being the *evill* of all evils: If the ground bee *sinne*, then

Further directions.

Cap. 14.

3.

Acts 16.31

then it must be drawne to a head, from a *confused* griefe to some more *particular* sinne, that so wee may strike the right veine; but if wee finde the spirit much cast downe for particular sinnes, then comfort is presently to bee applied; But if the griefe bee not fully ripe, *then*, as we use to *help* nature in its offers to purge, by *Phyſick*, till the sick matter be carried away; so when *conscience*, moved by the *spirit*, begins to ease it selfe by *confession*, it is good to helpe forward the worke of it, till wee finde the heart low enough for comfort to be laid upon. When *Paul* found the *Taylor* cast downe almost as low as hell, hee stands not now upon further hammering, and preparing of him for mercy, (that worke was done already,) but presently stirres him up to *beleeve in the Lord Iesus Christ*; here being a fit place for an Interpreter to declare unto man *his* righteousnesse, and *his* mercy that belongs unto *him* after he hath acknowledged *his* personall and *particular* sins, which the naturall guile of the heart is extreame-ly backward to doe, and yet cannot

cannot receive any sound peace till it be done: If signes of grace be discerned, here likewise is a fit place to declare unto man the saving worke of grace in his heart, which Satan labours to hide from him. Men oft are not able to reade their owne evidences without helpe.

In case of stitnesse and standing out, it is fit the *Man of God* should take some *authority* upon him, and lay a *charge* upon the soules of men in the Name of Christ, to give way to the truth of Christ, and to forbear putting off that mercy which is so kindly offered, when we judge it to be their portion; which course will bee succesfull in hearts *awed* with a reverend feare of *grieving Gods Spirit*. Sometimes men must bee dealt roundly withall, as *David* here deales with his owne soule, that so whilest we aske a reason of their dejection, they may plainly see they have no reason to be so cast downe; for oftentimes *grievances* are irrationall, rising from *mistakes*; and *counsell*, bringing into the soule a *fresh light*, dissolves those grosse *fogges*.

Cap. 14.

Col. 3. 14.

Psal. 41. 1.

fogges, and setteth the soule at *liberty*. What griefe is contracted by *false* reason, is by *true* reason altered. Thus it pleaseth God to humble men by letting them see in what need they stand one of another, that so the communion of Saints may be indeared; every relation wherein wee stand towards others, are so many bonds and sinewes whereby one *member* is fitted to derive comfort to another, *through love the bond of perfection*: All must be done in this sweet *affection*. A member out of joynt must be tenderly set in againe, and bound up, which onely men guided by the Spirit of love, seasoned with discretion are fit to doe, they are *taught of God* to doe what they should. The more of Christ is in any man, the more willingnesse and fitnesse to this duty; to which this should encourage us, that in strengthening *others* we strengthen *our selves*, and derive upon our selves the *blesing* pronounced on those that *consider the needy*, which will be our comfort here, and crowne hereafter, that God hath honoured us, to be *instruments* of spiritual

tual good to others. It is an injunction to comfort the feeble minded, and there is an heavy imputation on those that comforted not the weak: when men will not comfort men in trouble, but as the herd of Deere forsake & push away the wounded Deere from the: And those that are any wayes cast downe, must stoop to those wayes which God hath sanctified to convey comfort; for though sometimes the Spirit of God immediatly comforts the soule, which is the sweetest, yet for the most part the Sun of righteousness that hath healing in his wings, conveyeth the beames of his comfort by the helpe of others, in whom wee will have much of our comfort to lie hid, and for this very end it pleaseth God to exercise his children (and Ministers especially) with trialls and afflictions, that so they having felt what a troubled spirit is in themselves, might be able to comfort others, in their distresses with the same comfort wherewith they have beene comforted: God often suspends comfort from us to drive us to make use of our Christian friends, by whom he purposeth to doe

R.

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Cap. 14.
1 Thel. 5.
14.

Ezek. 34:4

Si illas molestias lingua dicat, a conspectu dolor emanat, vulnera enim clausa plus cruciant. Greg.

Cap. 14.

Matt. 4.
Gen. 3.

us good. Oftentimes the very opening of mens grievances, bringeth ease without any further working upon them; the very opening of a *veine* cooles the blood. If God in the state of *innocencie* thought it fit *man* should have a *helper*, if God thought it fit to send an *Angell* to comfort Christ in his *agonies*, shall any man thinke the comfort of *another* more than needs? Satan makes every *affliction*, by reason of our corruption, a *temptation* to us, whereupon wee are to encounter not onely with our owne *corruptions*, but with *spirituall wickednesses*, and need we not then that others should joine forces with us to discover the temptation, and to confirme and comfort us against it? for so *reason* joyning with *reason*, and *affection* with *affection*, wee come by uniting of strength, to bee impregnable. Satan hath most advantage in *solitarinesse*, and thereupon sets upon Christ in the *wilderneffe*, and upon *Eve* single, and it added to the glory of Christs victory, that he *overcame* him in a single combat, and in a place of such disadvantage. Those that

that will bee *alone* (at such times) doe
as much as in them lieth to tempt the
tempter himselfe to tempt them. The
Preacher gives three reasons why *two*
are better than one. 1. Because if *one*
fall, the other may *lift him up*; as that
which is *stronger* shoreth up that which
is *weaker*, so *feeble minds* are raised and
kept up by the *stronger*: Nay, often-
times he that is weaker in one grace, is
stronger in another; one may helpe by
his *experience* and *meeknesse of love*, that
needs the help of another for *knowledge*.
2. If *two lie together*, one may warme
another by *kindling one anothers spirits*.
Where *two* meete together upon such
holy grounds and aimes, there Christ
by his *Spirit* makes up another, and this
three-fold cable who shall breake?
While *Ions* lived, *Iehoiada* stood up-
right; While *Lutymmer* and *Ridley* lived,
they kept up *Cranmer* by intercourse of
letters and otherwise, from entertain-
ing counsels of *Revolts*. The Disci-
ples presently upon *Christs* apprehen-
sion *fainted*, notwithstanding he labou-
red by his heavenly doctrine to put

Cap. 14.

3.

*Solatium
vita, habere
cui pectus
aperius.
Ambros.*

2 Sam. 1. 20

Phil. 2. 27.

Miscarriages in the
party that
needs to be
comforted.

I.

courage and comfort into them. 3. If any give an *on-set* upon them, there is *two to withstand it*, Spirit joyning with spirit; and because there is an acquaintance of spirits as well as of persons, those are fittest to lay open our mindes unto, in whom upon experience of their fidelity, our hearts may most safely relie. We lose much of our strength in the losse of a true friend; which made *David* bemoane the losse of his friend *Jonathan*, *Woe is me for thee my brother Jonathan*. He lost a piece of himselfe, by losing him whom his heart so clave unto; Saint *Paul* accounted that God had shewed especiall mercy to him, in the recovery of *Epaphroditus*.

§. 4.

But there are divers miscarriages in those that are *troubled*, which make the *comfort* of others of none effect.

1. When the *troubled party* deales not directly, but *doubleth* with him that is to helpe him. Some are ashamed to *acknowledge* the true ground of their *grievance*, pretending sorrow for one thing,

thing, when their hearts tell them it ariseth from another; Like the *Lapwings* which make greatest noise farthest from their nest, because they would not have it discovered: This deceit moved our blessed Saviour (who knew what was in the hearts of men,) to fit his *answers* many times, rather to the *man* than to the *matter*.

2. Some rely too much upon particular men; Oh, if they had such a one they should do well, and mislike others, (fitter perhaps to deale with them, as having more through knowledge of their estates,) because they would have their disease rather *covered* than *cured*; or if *cured*, yet with *soft words*, whereas no plaister worketh better than that which causes smart. Some out of meere humorous *fondnesse* must have that which can hardly bee got, or else nothing pleases them: *David* must needs have the *waters of Bethleem* when others were neerer hand: And oftentimes when men have not onely whom they desire, but such also who are fit and dexterous in dealing with a troubled

2 Sam. 13.
15.

Cap. 14.

spirit, yet their soules feele no comfort, because they make *idols* of men; Whereas men at the best are but *conduits* of comfort, and such as God freely conveyeth *comfort* by, taking liberty oft to deny comfort by them, that so he may be acknowledged the *God of all comfort*.

3.

3. Some delude themselves, by thinking it sufficient to have a few good words spoken to them, as if that could cure them; not regarding to apprehend the same, and mingle it with *faith*, without which, *good words* lose their working, even as wholesome *Physick* in a dead stomach.

Besides miscarriages in *comforting*; times will often fall out in our lives, that wee shall have none either to comfort us, or to be comforted by us, and then what will become of us unlessse we can comfort our selves? Men must not thinke alwayes to live upon *almes*, but lay up something in store for themselves, and provide oyle for *their owne* lamps, and bee able to draw out something from the *treasury* of *their owne hearts*.

hearts. We must not goe to the Surge-
on for every scratch. No wise travel-
ler but will have some refreshing wa-
ters *about him*. Again, wee are often
driven to retire home to our owne
hearts, by uncharitable *imputations* of
other men; even *friends* sometimes
become *miserable comforters*: it was
Jobs case; his friends had honest inten-
tions to comfort him, but erred in their
manner of dealing; if he had found no
more comfort by reflecting upon his
owne *sincerity*, than hee received from
them, who laboured to take it from
him, hee had beene doubly miserable.
Wee are most privy to our owne inten-
tions and aimes, whence comfort must
bee fetched; Let others speake what
they can to us, if our owne hearts
speake not with them, we shall receive
no satisfaction. Sometimes it may fall
out, that those which should *unloose*
our spirits when they are *bound up*, mi-
stake, the key misses the right wards,
and so wee lie bound still. Opening of
our estate to another is not good, but
when it is necessary, and it is not ne-

Iob 2.

R 4

cessary,

Cap. 15

cessary, when we can fetch supply from our *owne* store; GOD would have us tender of our reputations, except in some speciall cases, wherein wee are to *give glory* to God by a free and full confession. Needleffe discovery of our selves to others, makes us feare the conscience of another man, as privy to that which wee are ashamed hee should bee privie unto; and it is neither *wisedome* nor *mercy* to put men upon the racke of *Confession*, further than they can have no ease any other way, for by this meanes wee raise in them a jealousie towards us; and oft without cause; which weakneth and tainteth that *love* which should *unite* hearts in *one*.

CAP. XV.
Of flying to God in disquiets of soule.
Eight observations out of the text.

Quest.

WHat if neither the speech of others to us, nor the rebuke of our owne hearts will quiet the soule; Is there no other remedy left?

Yes,

Yes, then looke up to God, the Father and fountaine of comfort, as *David* doth here; For the more speciall meanes whereby he sought to recover himselfe, was by laying a charge upon his soule to trust in God; for having let his soule runne out too much, he begins to recollect himselfe againe, and resigne up all to God.

Cap. 15

Ans.

§. I.

But, how came *David* to have the command of his owne soule, so, as to take it off from griefe, and to place it upon God, could hee dispose of his owne heart himselfe?

Quest.

The child of God hath something in him above a man, hee hath the Spirit of God to guide his spirit: this command of *David* to his soule was under the command of the Great Commander: God commands *David* to trust in him, and at the same time infuseth strength into his soule by thinking of Gods command, and trusting to Gods power, to command it selfe to trust in God: so that this command is not onely by

Ans.

autho-

Cap. 15.

authoritie, but by *vertue* likewise of Gods *command*: As the inferiour Orbes move as they are moved by a higher; So *Dauids* spirit here, moves as it is moved by *Gods Spirit*, which inwardly spake to him to speake to himselfe.

David in speaking thus to his owne soule, was, as every true Christian is, a *Prophet*, and an *instructor* to himselfe. It is but as if *inferiour Officers* should charge in the name and power of the King. Gods children have a principle of life in them from the Spirit of God, by which they command themselves. To give charge belongs to a Superiour; *David* had a double Superiour above him, his owne spirit as sanctified, and Gods Spirit guiding that. Our spirits are the *Spirits* agents, and the Holy Spirit is Gods agent, maintaining his right in us. As God hath made man a free agent, So hee guides him, and preserves that free maner of working which is agreeable to mans nature.

By this it appeares, that *Dauids* moving of himselfe, did not hinder the Spirits moving of him, neither did the
Spirits

Spirits moving of him, hinder him from moving himselfe in a free manner; for the *Spirit* of God moveth according to our principles, it openeth our understandings to see that it is best to *trust in God*; It moveth so sweetly, as if it were an inbred principle, and *all one* with our *owne* spirits; If we should hold our *will* to move it selfe, and not to bee moved by the Spirit, wee should make a God of it, whose property is to move other things, and not to bee moved by any.

Wee are in some sort *Lords* over our owne speeches and actions, but yet, under a *higher* Lord. *David* was willing to trust in God, but God wrought that *will* in him: he first makes our will *good*, and then workes by it. It is a sacrilegious liberty that will acknowledge no dependance upon God. Wee are wise in *his wisdom*, and strong in *his strength*, who saith, *Without mee yee can doe nothing*. But the budde of a good desire, and the blossome of a good resolution, and the fruit of a good action, all comes from G O D. Indeed
the

*Ergo in
liberi esse
volumus, ut
nos Deum
volunt ha-
bere Domi-
num? Aug.
de Spir. &
Lit.*

Ioh. 15.

Cap. 19.

*Certum est,
nos velle cū
volumus, sed
ille facit ut
velimus.*

Aug.

Duties.

1.

2.

the *understanding* is ours whereby wee know what to doe, and the *will* is ours whereby wee make choice of what is best to be done; but the *light* whereby wee know, and the *guidance* whereby wee choose, that is from a *higher agent*, which is ready to flow into us with present fresh supply, when by vertue of former strength wee put our selves forward in obedience to God. Let but *David* say to his soule being charged of God to *trust*, I charge thee my soule to *trust in him*, and hee findes a present strength inabling to it. Therefore wee must both depend upon God as the first Mover, and withall set all the inferior wheelles of our soules a going according as the Spirit of God ministers motion unto us. So shall wee bee free from *selfe-confidence*, and likewise from neglecting that order of working which God hath established. *David* hearkened what the *Lord* said, before hee said any thing to *himselfe*, so should wee. Gods commands tend to this, that wee should command our selves. God, and the Minister under God, bid

us

us *trust in him*, but all is to no purpose till grace be wrought in the soule, whereby it bids *it selfe*; Our speaking to others doth no good, till they by entertaining what we say, speake the same to their owne soules.

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In this *charge* of *David* upon his owne soule, we may see divers passages and *priviledges* of a gracious heart in trouble.

§. 2.

As, 1. *That a Christian when hee is beaten out of all other comforts, yet hath a God to runne unto. A wicked man* beaten out of earthly comforts, is as a naked man in a storme, and an unarmed man in the field, or as a ship tossed in the Sea without an anchor, which presently dashes upon rocks, or falleth upon quick-sands; but a Christian when hee is driven out of all comforts below, nay, when God seemes to bee angry with him, hee can appeale from God angry to God *appeased*, he can *wrestle* and strive with God by Gods *owne* strength, *fight* with him with his owne weapons

Obfer. 1

Cap. 15.

weapons, and *plead* with God by his owne *arguments*. What a happy estate is this? who would not be a Christian, if it were but for this, to have something to *rely* on when all things else faile? The confusion and unquietnesse which *troubles* raise in the soule, may drive it from *resting in it selfe*, but there can never be any true peace settled, untill it sees and resolves *what to stay upon*.

§. 3.

2.

2. We see here, that *there is a sanctified use of all troubles to Gods children*; first they drive them *out of themselves*, and then draw them *neerer to G O D*. Crosses indeed of themselves *estrangle* us more from God, but by an over-ruling worke of the *Spirit* they bring us *neerer to him*. The soule of it selfe is ready to *misgive*, as if God had too many *controversies* with it, to shew any favour towards it; and Satan helpeth; because hee knowes nothing can stand and prevaile *against God*, or a soule that *relieth on him*, therefore hee labours to *breed and encrease an everlasting division betwixt*

betwixt God and the soule ; but let not Christians muse so much upon their trouble, but see whither it carries them, whether it brings them neerer unto God, or not ; It is a never failing rule of discerning a man to be in the state of grace, *when he finds every condition draw him neerer to God* ; for thus it appears that such love God, and are called of him, unto whom all things worke together for the best.

Cap. 15.

Rom. 8. 28

§. 4.

3. Againe, hence wee see that the Spirit of God by these inward speeches doth awake the soule, and keepe it in a holy exercise, by stirring up the grace of faith to its proper function. It is not so much the having of grace, as grace in exercise, that preserves the soule ; therefore wee should by this and the like meanes stirre up the grace of God in us, that so it may bee kept a working and in vigour and strength. It was Davids manner to awake himselfe, by bidding both heart and harpe to awake. It is the waking Christian (that hath his wit and his grace ready about him) who is
the

3.

Cap. 15.

the safe Christian; grace *dormant* without the *exercise* doth not secure us. It is almost all one (in regard of present exigence) for grace not to *bee* and not to *work*. The soule without *action*, is like an instrument not played upon, or like a ship alwayes in the Haven. *Action* is a preservative of the *purity* of things. Even life it selfe is made more *lively* by action. The Spirit of GOD whereby his children are led, is compared to things of the quickest and strongest actions; as *fire* and *winde*, &c. God himselfe is a pure *act*, alwayes in *acting*; and every thing the nearer it comes to God, the more it hath its *perfection* in working. The happinesse of man consists chiefly in a gracious frame of *spirit*, and *actions* sutable sweetly issuing therefrom: the very *rest* of heavenly bodies is in *motion* in their proper places. By this stirring up the grace of God in us, *sparkles* come to bee *flames*, and all graces are kept bright. Troubles stirre up *David*, and *David* being stirred stirs up himselfe.

5. We

§. 5.

4.

4. We see likewise here a *further use of Soliloquies or speeches to our owne hearts*; when the soule by entring into it selfe sees it selfe put out of order, then it injoines this duty of *trusting in God* upon it: if wee looke onely on our selves and not turne to God, the worke of the soule is imperfect: *then* the soule worketh as it should, when as by reflecting on it selfe, it gathers some *profitable* conclusion, and leaveth it selfe with God. *David* upon reflecting on himselfe found nothing but *discouragement*, but when he looks upward to GOD, there hee findes *rest*. This is one end, why God suffers the soule to tire and beate it selfe, that finding *no rest* in it selfe, it might seeke to him. *David* yeelds not so much to his *passion* as that it should keepe him from God. Therefore let no man truly *religious* pretend (for an excuse) his *temper* or provoking *occasions*, &c. for *grace* doth raise the soule *above nature*; *Grace* doth not only *stop* the soule in an *evill* way, but car-

S

ries

Cap. 15.

Iam. 5. 17.

ries it to a contrary good, and raiseth it up to God. Though holy men bee *subject to like passions with others* (as it is said of *Elias*) yet they are not *so* inthrall'd to them, as that they cary them wholly away from their God, but they heare a voice of the *Spirit* within them, calling them back againe to their former *communion* with God; and so *grace* takes occasion, (even from *sinne*) to exercise it selfe.

§. 6.

5.

Gen. 8. 11.

5. Observe further, that *distrust* is the cause of all *disquiet*: the soule suffers it selfe by something *here* below to bee drawne away from God, but can finde no rest till it returne to him againe. As *Noahs Dove* had no place to set her foot upon, till it was received into the *Arke* from whence it came. And it is Gods mercy to us, that when wee have let goe our hold of God, wee should finde nothing but trouble and unquietnesse in any thing else, that so we might remember from whence *we are fallen*, and returne home againe. That is a good trouble which frees us from the greatest

greatest trouble, and brings with it the most comfortable rest; It is but an unquiet *quiet*, and a restless *rest* which is *out* of God. It is a deep spirituall judgement for a man to finde too much rest in the creature: The soule that hath had a saving worke upon it, will bee alwayes impatient untill it recover its former sweetnesse in God: After Gods Spirit hath once *touch*ed the soule, it will never bee quiet untill it stands pointed God-ward.

But conscience may object, *Vpon any offence is God offended*, and therefore not to be trusted.

It is true, where faith is not above naturall conscience; but a conscience sprinkled with the blood of Christ, is not scared from God by its infirmities and failings, but as David here, is rather stirred up to runne unto God by his *distemper*; and it had beene a greater sinne than his distemper *not* to have gone unto God. Those that have the spirit of *sonnes* in their hearts, runne not further *from* God after they have a little *straied from him*, but though it bee

Object.

Ans.
Trust in
God, tho
an offend
ed God.

Cap. 15.

the nature of sinfull *passions* to breed griefe and shame, yet they will repaire to God againe, and their *confidence* overcomes their *guilt*; So well are they acquainted with Gods gracious disposition.

Psal. 97. 10

Yet wee see here, *David* thinks not of *trusting in God*, till first he had done justice upon his owne soule, in rebuking the *unruly* motions thereof; *Censure* for sin goeth before *favour* in pardoning sinne, or *boldnesse* to aske pardon of God; those that *love God* must *hate ill*: If our *consciences* *condemne us* of allowing any sinne, wee cannot have *boldnesse with God* who is (light and can abide no darknesse and) *greater than our consciences*.

§. 7.

6.

6. Moreover, hence wee see it is no easie thing to bring God and the heart together: *David* here as hee often checks his heart, so hee doth often charge his heart; Doubts and troubles are still gathering upon him, and his faith still gathering upon them. As one striving to get the haven, is driven back by the waves,

waves, but recovering himselfe againe, gets forward still, and after often beating back, at length obtaines the wished haven, and then is at rest. So much adoe there is to bring the soule unto God, the harbour of true comfort. It were an easie thing to bee a Christian, if Religion stood onely in a few outward workes and duties, but to take the soule to taske, and to deale roundly with our owne hearts, and to let conscience have its full work, and to bring the soule into spirituall subjection unto God; this is not so easie a mater, because the soule out of selfe love is loath to enter into it selfe, lest it should have other thoughts of it selfe then it would have; *David* must bid his soule *trust*, and *trust*, and *trust* againe before it will yeeld. One maine ground of this difficulty, is that contrariety which is in the soule by reason of contrary principles: The soule so farre as it is gracious *commands*, so farre as it is rebellious *resists*, which drew holy *Austin* to a kinde of astonishment; "*The soule commands the body and it yeelds* (saith

Vnde hoc non sibi, & quare istud? Aug. Confes

Cap. 15.

*Non ex toto
vult, non ex
toto imperat,
in tantum
non fit quod
imperat, in
quantum
non vult.*

“ he) it commands it selfe, and is resisted
“ by it selfe ; it commands the hand to
“ move, and it moverh with such an
“ unperceivable quicknesse that you
“ can discerne no distance betwixt the
“ command and the morion: Whence
“ comes this? but because the soule
“ perfectly wills not, and perfectly in-
“ joynes not that which is good, and so
“ farre forth as it fully wils not, so farre
“ it holds backe. There should bee no
need of commanding the soule if it
were perfect, for then it would bee of
it selfe, what it now commandeth. If
David had gotten his soule at perfect
freedome at the first, he needed not
have repeated his charge so often upon
it. But the soule naturally sinks down-
ward, and therefore had need often to
be wound up.

6. 8.

7.

7. Wee should therefore labour to
bring our soules (as *David* doth here)
to a firme and peremptory resolution,
and not stand *wavering*, and as it were
equally ballanced betwixt God and o-
ther

ther things ; but enforce our soules, we shall get little ground of *infidelity* else ; drive your soules therefore to this issue, either to rely upon God, or else to yeeld up it selfe to the present grievance ; if by yeelding it resolves to be miserable theres an end, but if it desires *rest*, then let it resolve upon this onely way, to *trust in God* ; and well may the soule so resolve, because in God there are grounds of *quieting* the soule, above all that may unsettle it ; In him there is both *worth* to satisfie, and *strength* to support the soule. The best way to maintaine inward *peace*, is to settle and *fixe* our thoughts upon that which will make us *better*, till wee finde our hearts warmed and wrought upon thereby ; and then (as the Prophet speaks) *God will keepe us in peace : peace*, that is, *in perfect and abundant peace*. This resolution stayed *Iob*, that though God should kill him, yet hee resolved to *trust in him*. Answerable to our resolution is our *peace* : the more resolution the more *peace* ; *Irresolution* of it selfe without any grievance is full of *disqui-*

Elsay 26.3.

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et; It is an unsafe thing alwayes to begin to live; to bee alwayes cheapning and paltring with God: Come to this point once, *Trust God* I ought, therefore *trust God* I will, come what may or will.

And it is good to *renew* our resolutions againe and againe: for every *new resolution* brings the soule closer to GOD, and gets further in him, and brings fresh strength from him; which if wee neglect, our *corruption* joyning with outward *hinderances* will carry us further and further backward, and this will double, yea multiply our trouble and grieve to recover our selves againe; wee have both winde and tide against us: Wee are going up the hill, and therefore had need to arme our selves with *resolution*. Since the *fall*, the motion of the soule *upward* (as of heavy bodies) is violent, in regard of *corruption* which weighes it *downward*, and therefore all enforcement is little enough; Oppose therefore with *David* all *invincible* resolution, and then doubt not of prevailing; If wee resolve in
Gods

Gods power and not our owne, and bee strong in the Lord, and not in our selves, then it matters not what our troubles or temptations bee either from within, or without, for *trust in God* at length will triumph.

Here is a great mercy, that when *David* had (a little) let goe his hold of God, yet God would not let goe his hold of him, but by a spirit of faith drawes him back againe to himselfe; God *turnes us* unto him and then wee returne. *Turne us againe* (saith the Psalmist) *cause thy face to shine upon us, and wee shall bee saved.* When the soule leaves God once, it loses its way, and it selfe; and never returnes till God recalls it againe. If morall principles cherished and strengthened by good education, will enable the soule against vicious *inclinations*, so that though some influence of the heavens worke upon the *aire*, and the aire upon the *spirits*; and the spirits upon the *humors*, and these incline the *temper*, and that inclines the *soule* of a man such and such wayes, yet *breeding* in the refineder sort

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Eph. 6. 10.

Psal. 80. 19.

*Animus
eger semper
errat.*

Cap. 15.

sort of *civill* persons, will much prevaile to draw them another way? What then may we thinke of this powerfull grace of *faith*, which is altogether supernaturall? Will not this carry the soule above all naturall inclinations whatsoever (though strengthened by outward occasions) if wee resolve to put it to it? *David* was a King of *other men*, but here he shewes that hee was a King of *himselfe*; What benefit is it (for a man) to bee Ruler over all the world, and yet remaine a *slave* to himselfe?

§. 9.

8.

8. Againe, *David* here doth not onely resolve, but presently takes up his soule before it strayed too farre from God; the further and the longer the soule wanders from God, the more it intangles it selfe, and the thicker darknesse will cover the soule, yea the loather it is to come to God againe, being ashamed to looke God in the face after discontinuing of acquaintance with him; Nay the stronger the league growes betwixt

betwixt sinne and the soule, and the more there groweth a kinde of *susablenesse* betwixt the soule and sinne; Too long *giving way to base thoughts* and affections, discovers too much complacencie and *liking* of sinne. If we once give way, a *little* griefe will turne into *bitter* sorrow, and that into a *settled* pensivenesse and *heavinesse* of spirit, *fear* will grow into *astonishment*, and *discouragement* into *despaire*; If ever we meane to trust God, Why not now? How many are taken away in their *offers* and *essayes*, before they have prepared their hearts to cleave unto God? The sooner wee give up our selves to the Lord, the sooner wee know upon what termes wee stand, and the sooner wee provide for our best security, and have not our grounds of comfort to seeke when wee shall stand most in need of them. *Time* will salve up griefe in the meanest of men, *Reason* in those that will suffer themselves to be ruled thereby, will cure (or at least stay the fits of it) sooner: but *Faith* if we stirre it up, will give our soules no rest, untill

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till it hath brought us to our true rest (that is) to God: therefore we should presse the heart forward to God presently that Satan make not the rent greater.

Lastly, here wee see, that *though the soule bee over-borne by passion for a time, yet if grace hath once truly seasoned it, it will worke it selfe into freedom againe; grace as oyle will bee above.* The eye when any dust falls into it, is not more tender and unquiet, till it bee wrought out againe, than a gracious soule is being once troubled: the *spirit* as a spring will bee *cleansing* of it selfe more and more. Whereas the heart of a carnall man, is like a standing poole, whatsoever is cast into it, *there* it rests; trouble and disquietnesse in him are in their proper place; It is proper for the Sea to rage and cast up dirt; God hath set it downe for an eternall rule, that *vexation* and *sinne* shall bee inseparable. Happinesse and rest were severed from sinne in *heaven* when the Angels fell, and in *Paradise* when *Adam* fell, and will remaine *for ever* separated, untill the breach be made up by *faith* in Christ.

Iussu Domini & sic est, ut omnis inordinatus affectus sibi sit pœna.
Aug.
Gen. 3.

CAP.

CAP. XVI.

*Of trust in God: grounds of it: especially
his providence.*

BUt to come neerer to the unfolding
of this *trusting in God*, which *Da-
vid* useth here as a remedy against all
distempers. Howsoever confidence and
trust bee an *affection* of nature, yet by
the *spirits* sanctifying and carrying it
to the *right object*, it becomes a *grace* of
wonderfull use. In the things of *this
life* usually hee that *hopes most* is the
most unwise man; he being *most decei-
ved* that hopes most, because hee trusts
in that which is *uncertaine*, and there-
fore deceitfull hope is counted but the
dreame of a waking man. But in *Reli-
gion* it is farre otherwise, here, hope is
the maine supporting grace of the soul,
springing from faith in the *promises*
of God.

Trust and *hope* are often taken in the
same sense, though a distinction be-
twixt them hath sometimes its use: *faith*
looks

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lookes to the word *promising*, hope to the thing *promised* in the word ; faith lookes to the *authority* of the *promiser*, hope (especially) to the *goodnesse* of the *promise* ; *faith* looks upon things as present, *hope* as to come hereafter. God as the *first truth* is that which faith relies on, but God as the *chiefe good*, is that which hope rests on, *trust* or *confidence* is nothing else, but the strength of *hope*; if the thing hoped for be *deferred*, then of necessity it enforces *waiting*, and waiting is nothing else but hope and trust lengthened.

How soever there may bee use of these and such like distinctions, yet usually they are taken promiscuously, especially in the old Testament. The nature and use of *faith* is set out by tearmes of *staying, resting, leaning, rolling our selves* upon God, &c. which come all to one, and therefore we forbear any further curious distinction.

Now seeing *trusting in God* is a remedy against all distempers, it is necessary that wee should bring the *object* and the *act* (God and the Soule) together ;

God & the
Soule must
be brought
together
by trust.

ther ; for effecting of which, it is good to know something concerning God, and something concerning *trust*. God is onely the fit *object* of trust, *hee* hath all the properties of that which should be trusted on ; A man can bee in no condition wherein God is at a losse and cannot helpe him ; if comforts be wanting *hee* can create comforts, not onely out of *nothing*, but out of discomforts ; He made the *Whale* that swallowed up *Jonas*, a meanes to bring him to the *Shore* : The Sea was a *wall* to the *Israelites* on both sides : The devouring flames were a great refreshing to *the three children*, in the fiery *fornace* ; That trouble which *we* think will swallow us up, may bee a meanes to bring us to our haven ; So mighty is God in power, and so excellent in working. God then, and God onely is a fit foundation for the soule to build it selfe upon, for the firmer the *foundation* is, the stronger will the building be, therefore those that will build *high* must digge *deepe* : the higher the tree riseth, the deeper the root spreadeth and fast-
neth

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Iona. 1. 17

Dan. 3.

Esa. 28. 29.

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neth it selfe below. So it is in faith, if the foundation thereof be not *firme*, the soule cannot build it selfe *strongly* upon it; Faith hath a double *principle* to build on, either a principle of *being*, or a principle of *knowing*, the principle of *being* is *God himselfe*, the principle of *knowing* is *Gods word*, whereby God commeth forth (*out of that hidden light which none can attaine unto*) and discovereth his meaning towards us for our good.

I.

This then must 1. bee supposed for a ground, *that there is a God, and that God is*, (that is) hath a full and eternall *being*, and giveth a *Being*, and an *order* of *Being*, to all things else; some things have *only* a *Being*, some things *life* and *being*, some things *sense*, &c. and some things have a more *excellent being* including all the former, as the being of creatures indued with *reason*; If God had not a *being*, nothing else could be; In things subordinate one to another, take away the *first*, and you take away *all* the rest: Therefore this proposition (*God is*) is the *first* truth of all, and if this

this were not, *nothing* else should be: as we see, if the heavenly bodies doe not move, there is no motion here below.

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2. In the divine nature or being, there is a subsisting of *three persons*; every one so set out unto us, as fitted for us to trust in: the Father as a Creator, the Sonne as a Redeemer, the Holy Ghost as a Comforter, and all this in reference to us: God in the first person hath decreed the great work of our *salvation*, and all things tending to the accomplishment of it: God in the second person hath exactly and fully answered that decree and plot, in the work of our *redemption*; God in the third person, discovers and applies all unto us, and fits us for communion with the Father and the Sonne, from whom he proceeds.

2.

3. GOD cannot bee comfortably thought upon out of Christ our Mediator, in whom hee was reconciling the world to himselfe, as being a friend both to God and us, and therefore fit to bring God and the soule together, being a middle person in the Trinity; In Christ Gods nature becomes lovely to

3.

1 Cor. 5. 19

Cap. 16. *us, and ours to God: otherwise there is an utter enmity betwixt his pure and our impure nature: Christ hath made up the vaste gulfe betweene God and us; there is nothing more terrible to thinke on, than an absolute God, out of Christ.*

4. Therefore for the better drawing of us to trust in God, wee must conceive of him under the sweet relation of a Father; Gods nature is Fatherly now unto us, and therefore lovely.

5. And for further strengthening our faith, it is needfull to consider what excellencies the Scripture giveth unto God, answerable to all our necessities; what sweet Names God is pleased to bee knowne unto us by for our comfort, as a mercifull, gracious, long suffering God, &c.

Exod. 34. 6

When Moses desired to see the glory of God, God thus manifested himself, in the way of goodnesse, *I will make all my goodnesse passe before thee.*

Exo. 33. 16

Whatsoever is good in the creature, is first in God as in a fountaine; and it is in God in a more eminent manner

manner and *fuller* measure. All *grace* and holinesse, all sweetnesse of *affection*, all *power* and *wisdom*e, &c. as it is *in* him, so it is *from* him, and wee come to conceive these properties to bee in God,
 1. by feeling the comfort and power of them in our selves; 2. by observing these things in their measure to bee in the best of the creatures, whence wee arise to take notice of what grace, and what love, what strength and wisdom, &c. is in God; by the beames of *these* which wee see in his creature, with adding in our thoughts *fulnesse*, peculiar to God, and abstracting *imperfections*, incident to the creature; for that is in God in the highest degree, the sparkles whereof is but in us.

6. Therefore it is fit that unto all other *eminencies* in God; wee should strengthen our faith by considering those glorious *singularities*, which are altogether *incommunicable* to the creature, and which give strength to his other properties, as that God is not only *gracious* and *loving*, *powerfull*, *wise*, &c. but that hee is infinitely, eternally,

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and unchangeably so. All which are comprised *in* and drawne *from* that one name *Iehovah*, as being of *himselfe*, and giving a being to *all* things else, of *nothing*; and able when it pleaseth him to turne all things to nothing againe.

7.

What God
is, he ma-
keth good
by provi-
dence.

As God is thus, so hee makes it good by answerable *actions* and *dealing* towards us, by his continuall *providence*; the consideration whereof is a great stay to our faith, for by this providence God makes use of all his former excellencies for his peoples good; for the more comfortable apprehension of which, it is good to know that Gods *providence* is extended as farre as his *creation*. Every creature (in every element and place whatsoever) receiveth a powerfull influence from God, who doth what pleaseth him, both *in heaven, and earth, in the sea, and all places*; But wee must know, God doth not put things into a frame, and then leave them to their owne motion, as we doe *clocks*, after wee have once set them right, and *ships* after wee have once built them, commit them to winde and waves;

waves; but as hee *made* all things, and *knowes* all things, so (by a continued kind of creation) he preserves all things in their being and working, and governes them to their ends: Hee is the first mover that sets all the wheelles of the creature a working: One wheelle may move another, but all are moved by the first. If God moves not, the *clock* of the creature stands. If God should not uphold things, they would presently fall (*to nothing*) from whence they came. If God should not guide things, *Satans* malice, and *mans* weakenesse, would soone bring all to a confusion. If God did not rule the great family of the world, all would breake and fall to pieces, whereas the wise *providence* of God, keepeth every thing on its right hinges. All things stand in obedience to this *providence* of God, and nothing can withdraw it selfe from under it; If the creature withdraw it selfe from one order of providence, it falls into another; If man (the most unruly and disordered creature of all) withdraw himselfe from Gods *gracious* government

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of him to *happinesse*, hee will soone fall under Gods just government of him to *deserved misery*; If hee shakes off Gods sweet yoake, hee puts himselfe under Satans heavy yoake, who (as Gods executioner) hardens him to destruction; and so whiles hee rushes against Gods will, he fulfils it. And whilst he will not willingly doe Gods will, Gods will is done upon him against his will.

The most casuall things fall under *providence*, yea (the most disordered thing in the world, (sinne) and of sins the most horrible that ever the Sunne beheld) *the crucifying of the Lord of life*, was guided by a hand of *providence* to the greatest good. For that which is *casuall* in regard of a *second cause*, is not so in regard of the first, whose *providence* is most cleerely seene in casuall events that fall out by *accident*, for in these the *effect* cannot be ascribed to the next *cause*, God is said to kill him, who was unwarily slaine by the falling of an axe or some *instrument* of death.

Deut. 19.5

And though man hath a *freedome* in working, and (of all men) *the hearts of Kings*

Kings are most free, yet even these are guided by an *over-ruling power*, as the rivers of water are carried in their channels, whither skillfull men list to derive them.

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Pro. 31.1.

For settling of our *faith* the more, God taketh liberty in using weake meanes to great purposes, and setteth aside more *likely* and *able* meanes, yea sometimes he altogether disableth the greatest meanes, and worketh often by no meanes at all. It is not from want of power in God, but from abundance and multiplying of his goodnesse, that hee useth any means at all: there is nothing that he doth by meanes, but hee is able to doe without meanes.

Nay, God often bringeth his will to passe by crossing the course and streame of meanes, to shew his own *soveraignty*, and to exercise our *dependance*; and maketh his very enemies, the accomplisshers of his owne will, and so, to bring about that which they oppose most. Hence it is that we beleeve *under hope* *against hope*.

Psal. 135.6

But wee must know, Gods manner

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of *guiding* things is without prejudice of the proper working of the things themselves; hee guideth them sweetly according to the *instincts* hee hath put into them; for,

1.

1. He furnishes *creatures* with a vertue and power to worke, and likewise with a manner of working sutable to their owne nature, as it is proper for a man (when he workes) to worke with

2.

freedome, and other creatures by naturall instinct, &c. 2. God maintaineth both the power and manner of working, and perfecteth and accomplisheth the same by acting of it, being nearer to us in all wee doe, than wee are to our selves. 3. He applies and stirres up our abilities and actions, to this or that particular as he seeth best. 4. He suspends or removes the hinderances of all actions, and so powerfully, wisely, and sweetly orders them to his owne ends. When any evill is intended, God either puts barres and lets to the execution of it, or else limiteth and boundeth the same both in regard of *time* and *measure*, so that our enemies either

*superior in
time no 3ro.*

3.

4.

shall

shall not doe the evill at all, or else not so long a *time*, or not in such a *height* of mischief, as their malice would carry them to : *The rod of the wicked may light upon the back of the righteous*, but it *shall not rest* there. God knowes how to take our enemies off, sometimes by changing, or stopping their wills, by offering considerations of some good or ill, danger or profit to them ; sometimes by taking away, and weakning all their strength, or else by opposing an equall or greater strength against it. All the strength our enemies have rests in God ; who if hee denies concurrence and influence, the *arme* of their power, (as *Ieroboams* when hee stretcht it out against the *Prophet*) shrinks up presently.

God is not onely the cause of things and actions, but the cause likewise of the cessation of them, why they fall not out at all. GOD is the cause why things are *not*, as well as why they *are* ; The cause why men favour us not, or (when they doe favour us) want present wisdom and ability to helpe us, is from

*Deus est
prima causa
cujus causa
non esse.*

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from Gods withdrawing the concurrence of his light and strength from them. If a skilfull Physitian doth us no good, it is because it pleaseth God to hide the right way of curing at that time from him. Which should move us to see God in all that befalls us, who hath sufficient reason, as to *doe* what he doth, so *not* to doe what he doth not, to hinder, as well as to give way.

The God of spirits hath an influence into the spirits of men, into the principles and springs of all actions; Otherwise hee could not so certainly foretell things to come. God had a worke in *Absaloms* heart in that hee refused the best counsell; there is nothing independent of him, who is the mover of all things, and himselfe unmoveable.

Nothing so *high*, that is above his providence; Nothing so *low*, that is beneath it; Nothing so *large*, but is bounded by it; Nothing so *confused*, but God can order it; Nothing so *bad*, but hee can draw good out of it; Nothing so wisely plotted, but God can disappoint it, as *Achitophels* counsell; No-
thing

thing so simply and unpolitiquely caried, but hee can give a prevailing issue unto it: Nothing so freely caried, in regard of the next cause, but God can make it necessary in regard of the event: Nothing so naturall, but he can suspend, in regard of operation, as heavy bodies from sinking, fire from burning, &c.

It cannot but bring strong security to the soule, to know that in all variety of changes, and intercourse of good and bad events, *God*, and *Our God*, hath such a disposing hand. Whatsoever befalls us, all serves to bring Gods *electing* love, and our *glorification* together. Gods *providence* serveth his *purpose* to save us. All *sufferings*, all *blessings*, all *ordinances*, all *graces*, all *common gifts*, nay our very *falls*, yea *Satan* himselfe with all his *instruments*, as over-mastered, and ruled by God, have this injunction upon them, to further Gods good intendment to us, and a prohibition to doe us no harme. *Augustus* taxed the world for civillends, but Gods providence used this as a meanes for Christ

to

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Ester 6.1.

Divini cō-
siliū dum
deviatur,
impletur,
humana sa-
pientia dum
reclatatur,
comprehē-
ditur. Greg.
Ex. 10. 11.

to bee borne at *Bethleem*. *Ahashuerosh* could not sleepe, and thereupon calls for the *Chronicles*, the reading of which occasioned the *Iewes* delivery. God oft disposeth little occasions, to great purposes. And by those very waies whereby proud men have gone about to withstand Gods counsells, they have fulfilled them, as wee see in the story of *Ioseph* and *Moses*, in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, He was above them.

CAP. XVII.

Of graces to be exercised in respect of Divine Providence.

WEe are under a providence that is above our owne; which should be a ground unto us, of exercising those graces that tend to settle the soule in all events. As,

1. Hence to lay our hand upon our mouthes, and command the soule an holy silence, not daring to yeeld to the least rising of our hearts against God.

Psal. 39.9.

I was dumbe, and opened not my mouth, because

because thou didst it, saith David. Thus Aaron when he had lost his two sonnes, both at once, and that by fire, and by fire from heaven, which carried an evidence of Gods great displeasure with it, yet held his peace.. In this silence and hope is our strength. Flesh and blood is proane to expostulate with God, and to question his dealing, as we see in Gideon, Ieremie, Asaph, Habaccuk, and others. If the Lord be with us, why then is all thus befallen us? but after some struggling betweene the flesh and the spirit the conclusion will bee, yet, howloever matters goe, God is good to Israel. Where a fearefull spirit, and a melancholy temper, a weake judgement, and a scrupulous and raw conscience meet in one, there Satan and his, together with mens owne hearts, which like Sophisters are continually cavilling against themselves, breed much disquiet, and makes the life uncomfortable. Such therefore should have a speciall care as to grow in knowledge, so to stick close to sure and certaine grounds, and bring their consciences to the rule. Darkenesse causeth

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Levit. 10.
13.

Psal. 73. 1.

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causeth feares. The more light, the more confidence. When wee yeeld up our selves to God, wee should resolve upon *quietnesse*, and if the heart stirres, presently use this check of *David*, *Why art thou disquieted?*

Gods wayes seeme oft to us full of contradictions, because his course is to bring things to passe by contrary meanes. There is a mystery not onely in Gods *decree* concerning mans eternall estate, but likewise in his *providence*, as why he should deale unequally with men, otherwise equall. His judgements are a great depth, which we cannot fadome, but they will swallow up our thoughts and understandings. God oft wraps himselfe in a cloude, and will not be seene till afterward. Where we cannot trace him, wee ought with *S. Paul* to *admire* and *adore* him. When wee are in heaven, it will be one part of our happinesse, to see the harmony of those things, that seem now confused unto us. All Gods dealings will appeare beautifull in their due seasons, though we for the present see not the contiguity

ity and linking together of one thing with another.

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2. Hence likewise proceeds a holy resigning of our selves to God, *who doth all things according to the counsell of his owne will*. His will is a wise will, it is guided by *counsell*, a soveraigne prevailing will. The onely way to have our will, is to bring it to Gods will. *If wee could delight in him, wee should have our hearts desire*. Thus David yeelds up himselfe unto God; *Here I am, let the Lord deale with mee as seemeth good unto him*. And thus Elie, when God foretold by Samuel the ruine of his house, quiets himselfe, *It is the Lord, let him doe what seemeth him good*. Thus our blessed Saviour stayes himselfe, *Not my will, but thy will bee done*. And thus the people of God, when Paul was resolved to goe to Ierusalem, submitted, saying, *The will of the Lord be done*; a speech fit to proceed out of the heart and mouth of a Christian.

2.

*Voluntas
Dei necessi-
tas rei.*

2 Sam. 15.
26.

1 Sā. 3. 18.

Act. 21. 14
*Vox vere
Christiano-
rum.*

Wee may desire and long after a change of our condition, when wee looke upon the grievance it selfe, but
yet

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Rev. 6. 10.

yet remember still that it bee with reservation, when wee looke upon the *will of God*, as *How long Lord, holy and true*, &c. Out of inferiour reasons wee may with our Saviour desire a removall of the *cup*, but when wee looke to the *supream reason of reasons*, the *will of God*, here we must stoop and kisse the rod. *Thus humbling our selves under his mighty band*, which by murmuring and fretting wee may make more heavy, but not take off, still adding new guilt, and pulling on new judgements.

3.

3. The way patiently to *suffer Gods will*, is to inure our selves first to *doe it*. *Passive obedience* springs from *active*. Hee that endures any thing, will endure it quietly, when hee knowes it is the will of God, and considers that what ever befalls him, comes from his good pleasure. Those that have not inured themselves to the yoke of *obedience*, will never endure the yoke of *suffering*, they fume and rage as a wilde Bull in a net, as the Prophet speaks. It is worth the considering, to see two men of equall parts

parts under the same crosse, how quietly and calmly the one that establisheth his soule on Christ, will beare his afflictions, whereas the other rageth as a foole, and is more beaten.

Nothing should displease us, that pleaseth God; neither should any thing be pleasing to us, that displeaseth him. This conformity is the ground of comfort. Our owne will takes away God, as much as in it lies. *If wee acknowledge God in all our wayes, hee will direct our paths, and leade us the way that we should goe.* The quarrell betwixt God and us is taken up, when *his* will, and our will are *one*; when wee have sacrificed our selves, and our wills unto God; when, as hee is highest in himselfe, so his will hath the highest place in our hearts. Wee finde by experience, that when our wills are so subdued, that wee delight *to doe*, what God would have us doe, and *to bee* what God would have us bee, that then sweet peace presently riseth to the soule.

When wee can say, Lord, if thou wilt have me poore and disgraced, I am

Propria voluntas Dei quantum in ipsa eximit
Prov. 3.6.
Esa. 48.20

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content to be so. If thou wilt have me serve thee in this condition I am in, I will gladly doe so. It is enough to mee that *thou* wouldst have it so. I desire to yeeld readily, humbly, and cheerefully, to thy disposing *providence*. Thus a godly man sayes *Amen* to Gods *Amen*, and puts his *fiat* and *placet* to Gods. As the *Sea* turnes all rivers into its owne rellish; so he turnes all to his owne spirit, and makes whatsoever befalls him, an exercise of some vertue. A *Heathen* could say, that calamities did rule over men, but a wise man hath a spirit overruling all calamities, much more a *Christian*. For a man to be in this estate, is to enjoy heaven *in the world* under heaven; Gods *Kingdome* comes where *his will is thus done* and suffered.

None feelee more sweet experience of Gods *providence*, than those that are most resolute in their obedience. After we have given glory to God in relying upon his *wisedome, power, and truth*, wee shall finde him imploying *these* for our direction, assistance, and bringing about of things to our desired issue, yea above

bove what ever wee looked for, or thought of.

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In all cases that fall out, or that wee can put to our selves, as in case of extremity, opposition, strange accidents, desertion, and damps of spirit, &c. here we may take *Sanctuary*, that wee are in covenant with him, who sits at the sterne and rules all, and hath committed the government of all things to his *Sonne*, our *Brother*; our *Ioseph*, the second person in heaven. Wee may bee sure no hurt shall befall us, that he can hinder; and what cannot hee hinder *that hath the keyes of hell and of death*? unto whom we are soneere, that he carries *our names* in his breast, and on his shoulders, as the high Priests did those of the twelve Tribes. Though his Church seems a widow neglected, yet hee will make the world know, that sice hath a Husband will right her in his good time.

4.

But it may be demanded, What course is to be taken, for guidance of our lives in particular actions, wherein doubts may arise, what is most agreeable to the will of God?

Quest.

Ans.

1. We must not put all carelessly up.

1.

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Summa ratio
que pro
religione fa-
cit.

on a *providence*, but first consider what is *our* part, and so farre as God prevents us with light, and affords us helps and meanes, wee must not bee failing in our duty. Wee should neither out-runne, nor be wanting to *providence*. But in perplexed cases, where the reasons on both sides seem to be equally ballanced, see whether part makes more for the maine end, the *glory of God*, the *service of others*, and advancement of *our owne spirituall good*. Some things are so cleare and even, that there is not a *best* between them, but *one* may be done as well as the *other*, as when two wayes equally tend to one and the same place.

2.

2. Wee are *not our owne*, and therefore must not set up our selves. Wee must not consult with *flesh and blood* either in our selves or others, for selfe-love will deprave all our actions, by setting before us corrupt ends. It considers not what is best, but what is safest. By-respects sway the ballance the wrong way.

3.

3. When things are cleare, and Gods will is manifest, further *deliberation* is dangerous

dangerous, and for the most part argues a false heart, as wee see in *Balaam*, who though hee knew Gods minde, yet would bee still consulting, till God in judgement gave him up to what his *covetous* heart led him unto. A man is not fit to deliberate, till his heart bee purged of false aimes, for else God wil give him up to the darkenesse of his owne spirit, and hee will be alwayes warping unfit for any byas. Where the aimes are good, there God delighteth to reveale his good pleasure. Such a soule is levell and suitable to any good counsell, that shall be given; and prepared to entertaine it. In what measure any lust is favoured, in that measure the soul is darkned. Even *wise Solomon*, whilest he gave way to his *lust*, had like to have lost his wisdome.

We must looke to our place wherein God hath set us; if we be in subjection to others, *their* authority ought to sway with us. Neither is it the calling of those that are subjects, to enquire over-curiously into the mysteries of government, for *that*, both in peace and

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warre breeds much disturbance, and would trouble all designs.

The lawes under which we live, are particular determinations of the law of God in some duties of the *second table*. For example, The Law of God sayes, *Exact no more than what is thy due*. But what in particular is thy due, and what another mans, the lawes of men determine, and therefore ought to be a rule unto us so farre as they reach: though it be too narrow a rule to be good *onely* so farre as mans law guides unto; yet *law* being the joynt reason and consent of many men for publique good, hath an use for guidance of all actions that fall under the same; where it dashes not against Gods law: what is agreeable to *law*, is agreeable to *conscience*.

Nimis angusta innocentia est, ad legem bonum esse.

The law of God in the due enlargement of it, to the least beginning and occasions is exceeding broad, and allowes of whatsoever stands with the light of reason, or the bonds of humanity, civility, &c. and whatsoever is against these, is *so farre* against Gods law. So that higher rules bee looked to
in

in the first place, there is nothing lovely, or praise-worthy among men, but ought to be seriously thought on.

Nature of it selfe is wilde and untamed, and impatient of the yoke ; but as beasts that cannot indure the yoke at first, after they are enured a while unto it, bear it willingly, and cary their work more easily by it ; So the yoke of obedience makes the life regular and quiet. The meeting of authority, and obedience together, maintaines the order and peace of the world.

So of that question.

Though blindfold obedience, such as our *Adversaries* would have, be such as will never stand with sound peace of conscience, which alwayes lookes to have light to direct it ; (for else a blinde conscience would breed blinde feares) yet in such doubtfull cases wherein we cannot winde out our selves, we ought to light our candles at others, whom wee have cause to thinke by their *place* and *parts* should see further then wee. In matters of outward estate, we will have men skilfull, of our counsell ; and

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*Sententia
boni viri.*

Christians would finde more sound peace, if they would advise with their godly and learned Pastors and friends. Where there is not a direct word, there is place for the counsell of a prudent man. And it is a happinesse for them whose *businessse* is much, and *parts* not large, to have the benefit of those that can give aime, and see further than themselves. The meanest Christian understands his owne way and knowes how to doe things with better advantage to his soule, than a gracelesse though learned man; yet is still glad of further discovery. *In counsell* there is peace, *the thoughts* being thus *establi- shed*.

When wee have advised and served Gods *providence* in the use of meanes, then if it fall out otherwise then wee looke for, wee may confidently conclude, that God would not have it so, otherwise to our grieve wee may say, it was the fruit of our owne rashnesse.

Where wee have cause to thinke that wee have used better meanes in the search of grounds, and are more free from

from partiall affections than others, there wee may use our owne advice more safely. Otherwise what wee doe by consent from others, is more secure and lesse offensive, as being more countenanced.

In advice with others, it is not sufficient to bee generally wise, but experienced and knowing in that wee aske, which is an honor to Gods gifts where we finde them in any kinde. When we set about things in *passion*, we work not as men or Christians, but in a bestiall manner. The more passion, the lesse discretion; because passion hinders the sight of what is to be done: It clouds the soule, and puts it on to action without advisement. Where passions are subdued, and the soule purged and cleared, there is nothing to hinder the impression of Gods Spirit; the soule is fitted as a cleane glasse to receive light from above. And that is the reason why *mortified men* are *fittest* to advise with in the particular cases incident to a Christian life.

After all advise, extract what is fittest,

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test, and what our spirits doe most bend unto: For in things that concerne our selves, God affords a light to discern out of what is spoken, what best suiteth us. And every man is to follow most what his owne *conscience*, (after information) dictates unto him; because conscience is Gods deputy in us, and under God most to bee regarded, and whosoever sins against *it*, in his owne construction, sinnes against God. God vouchsafeth every Christian in some degree, the grace of *spirituall prudence*, whereby they are enabled to discern what is fittest to bee done in things that fall within their compasse.

7.

It is good to observe the particular becks of providence, how things joine and meet together: fit occasions and futing of things are intimations of Gods will. *Providence* hath a language, which is well understood by *those* that have a familiar acquaintance with Gods dealing, they see a traine of providence, leading one way more than to another.

8.

Take especiall heed of not grieving
the

the Spirit, when hee offers to bee our guide, by studying evasions, and wishing the case were otherwise. This is to bee Law-givers to our selves, thinking that we are wiser than God. The use of discretion is not to direct us about the end, whether wee should doe well or ill, (for a single heart alwayes aimes at good :) but when we resolve upon doing well, and yet doubt of the manner how to performe it : discretion looks not so much to what is lawfull, (for that is taken for granted,) but what is most expedient. A discreet man looks not to what is *best*, so much as what is *fittest* in such and such respects, by cying circumstances, which if they sort not, doe vary the nature of the thing it selfe.

And because it is not in *man* to know his owne wayes, wee should looke up unto *Christ*, the great *Counsellour* of his *Church*, to vouchsafe the spirit of counsell and direction to us : that may *make our way plaine before us*, by suggesting unto us, *this is the way, walke in it*. Wee owe God this respect, to depend upon him

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him for direction in the particular passages of our lives, in regard that hee is our *Soveraigne*, and his will is the *rule*, and wee are to be accountable to him as our *Iudge*. It is God onely that can see through businesses, and all helps and lets that stand about.

After wee have rolled our selves upon God, wee should immediatly take that course hee enclines our hearts unto, without further distracting feare. Otherwise it is a signe wee *commit not our way unto him*, when we do not quietly *trust him*, but remain still as thoughtfull, as if wee did not trust him. After prayer and trust followes the *peace of God*, and a heart void of further dividing *care*. We should therefore presently question our hearts, for questioning his *care*, and not regard what *feare* will bee ready to suggest, for that is apt to raise conclusions against our selves, out of selfe-conceited grounds, whereby wee usurpe upon God, and wrong our selves.

Phil. 2. 4.

Dan. 3.

It was a good resolution of the *three young men in Daniel*, *Wee are not carefull*

to answer thee O King. We know our duty, let God doe with us as he pleaseth. If *Abraham* had hearkned to the voice of nature, he would never have resolved to sacrifice *Isaac*, but because he cast himselfe upon Gods providing, God in the *Mount* provided a *Ramme* instead of his *Sonne*.

Cap. 28.

CAP. XVIII.

Other grounds of trusting in God, namely, the Promises. And twelve Directions about the same.

§. I.

BUt for the better setting of our trust in God, a further discovery is necessary then of the nature and providence of God; for though the nature of God be written in the booke of the *Creatures* in so great letters, as hee that runs may read; and though the providence of God appeares in the order and use of things; yet there is another booke whereby to know the will of God towards us, and our duty towards him: We must therefore

There must be a discovery of the mind of God, as well as of his nature.

Cap. 18.

therefore have a knowledge of the *promises* of God, as well as of his *providence*; for though God hath discovered himselfe most graciously in Christ unto us, yet had we not a word of *promise*, wee could not have the boldnesse to build upon Christ *himselfe*; therefore from the same grounds (that *there is a God*) there must bee a revealing of the will of God, for else we can never have any firme *trust* in *him* further than hee offers himselfe to be *trusted*; Therefore hath God opened his heart to us in his *Word*, and reached out so many sweet *promises* for us to lay hold on, and stooped so low, (by gracious *condescending* mixed with *authority*) as to enter into a Covenant with us to perform all things for our good: for *Promises* are (as it were) the stay of the soule in an *imperfect* condition, and so is *faith* in them, untill all *promises* shall end in *performance*, and *faith* in *sight*, and *hope* in *possession*.

1.

Now these promises are 1. for their *spring* from whence they proceed, *free engagements* of God; for if hee had not
bound

bound himselfe, who could? and 2. they are for their value *precious*, and 3. for their *extent* large, even of all things that conduce to happineffe; and 4. for their *vertue* quickning and strengthening the soule, as comming from the love of God, and conveying that love unto us by his *Spirit* in the best fruits thereof: and 5. for their *certainly*, they are as sure as the Love of God in Christ is, upon which they are founded, and from which *nothing can separate us*. For all promises are either Christ himselfe, (*the promised seed*) or else they are of good things made to us *in him* and *for him*, and accomplished for his sake; they are all made *first* to him as *heire of the promise*, as *Angel of the Covenant*, as *head* of his body, and as our Elder brother, &c. for *promises* being the fruits of Gods love, and Gods love being founded *first* on Christ, it must needs follow that all the promises are both made, and made good to us in and through him, who is *yesterday and today, and for ever the same*.

That wee should not call Gods love
in o

Cap. 18.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Rom. 8. 39

Heb. 13. 8.

Cap. 18.

1. into question, he not onely gives us his
2. word, but a binding word, *his promise*;
3. and not onely a *naked* promise, but hath
- entred into *Covenant* with us, founded
- upon full satisfaction by the blood of
- Christ; and unto this *Covenant sealed*
- by the blood of the Lord Jesus, he hath
- added the *seales of Sacraments*, and unto
4. this hee hath added his *oath*, that there
5. might bee no place left of doubting to
- the distrustfull heart of man; there is no
- way of securing *promises* amongst men,
- but God hath taken the same to *him-*
- selfe*, and all to this end, that wee might
- not onely *know* his minde towards us,
- but be fully *perswaded* of it, that as veri-
- ly *as hee lives*, he will make good what
- ever he hath promised for the comfort
- of his Children. What greater assurance
- can there bee, then for Being *it selfe* to
- lay his being to pawne? and for life *it*
- selfe* to lay life to pawne, and all to com-
- fort a poore soule?

The boundlesse and restless desire
of mans spirit will never bee stayed
without some discovery of the *chiese*
good, and the way to attaine the same:

men

Cap. 18.

men would have beene in darknesse about their finall condition, and the way to please God and to pacifie and purge their consciences, had not the word of God set downe the *spring* and *cause* of all evill, together with the cure of it, and directed us how to have communion with G O D, and to raise our selves above all the evill which wee meet withall betwixt us and happinesse, and to make us every way *wise to salvation*. Hence it is that the *Psalmist* prefers the manifestation of God by his *word*, before the manifestation of him in his most glorious *works*.

Psal. 19. 7.

And thus wee see the necessity of a double principle for *faith* to rely on;
 1. *God*, and 2. *the word of God* revealing his will unto us, and directing us to make use of all his *Attributes, Relations,* and *Providence* for our good; and this *word* hath its strength from him who gives a being and an accomplishment unto it; for *words* are as the authority of *him* that uttereth them is; When we looke upon a *Grant* in the word of a *King*, it stayes our mindes, because we

X

know

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know hee is able to make it good; and why should it not satisfie our soules to looke upon *promises* in the word of a God? whose words, as they come from his *truth* and expresse his *goodnesse*, so they are all made good by his *power* and *wisedome*.

By the bare word of *G O D* it is, that the *heavens* continue, and the *earth* (without any other foundation) hangs in the mids of the world, therefore well may the soule stay it selfe on *that*, even when it hath nothing else in sight to rely upon; By his word it is, that the *covenant* of *day* and *night*, and the preservation of the world from any further *overflowing of waters* continueth; which if it should faile, yet his covenant with his people shall abide firme for ever, though the whole frame of nature were dissolved.

Trust must
answer the
truth of
God.

When we have *thus* gotten a fit foundation for the soule to lay it selfe upon, Our next care must be (by *trusting*) to build on the same; All our misery is either in having a *false foundation*, or else in *loose building* upon a true; there-
fore

fore having so strong a ground as Gods Nature, his providence, his promise, &c. to build upon, the onely way for establishing our soules is (*by trust*) to rely firmly on him.

Now the reason why *Trust* is so much required, is because 1. it *emptieth* the soule, and 2. by emptying enlargeth it, and 3. seasoneth and fitteth the soule to joyne with so gracious an object, and 4. filleth it by carrying it out of it selfe unto God, who presently (so soone as he is trusted in) conveyes himselfe and his goodnesse to the soule ; and thus we come to have the comfort, and God the glory of all his excellencies. Thus salvation comes to bee sure unto us, whilst *faith* looking to the *promises* (and to God freely offering grace therein) resigns up it selfe to God, making no further question from any unworthinesse of its owne.

And thus wee returne to God by *cleaving* to him, from whom we fell by *distrust*, living under a *new covenant* meerely of *grace* ; And no grace fitter than that which gives all to CHRIST,

Cap. 18.

Why *faith* so requi-
site in
Christians

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Ier. 31. 3.

Cap. 18.

considering the fountaine of all our good is (out of our selves) *in him*, it being safest for us (who were so ill husbands at the first) that it should bee so, therefore it is fit wee should have use of such a grace that will carry us out of our *selves* to the spring head.

The way then whereby *faith* quieteth the soule, is, by raising it *above* all discontentments and stormes here below, and pitching it upon God, thereby uniting it to him, whence it drawes *virtue* to oppose and bring under whatsoever troubles its peace. For the soule is made for God, and never findes rest till it returns to him againe; when God and the soule meet, there will follow contentment; God (simply considered) is not all our happinesse, but God as *trusted in*; and Christ as wee are made *one with him*; The soule cannot so much as *touch the hemme* of *Christs garment*, but it shall finde *virtue comming from him* to sanctifie and settle it; God in Christ is full of all that is good; when the soule is *emptied, enlarged and opened* by *faith* to receive goodnesse offered, there

Mat. 9.10.

there must needs follow sweet satisfaction.

Cap. 18.

§. 2.

For the better strengthning of our *trust*, it is not sufficient that wee trust in God and his *truth* revealed, but we must doe it by *light* and *strength* from him: Many beleeve in the truth by *humane* arguments, but no arguments will convince the soule but such as are fetched from the *inward* nature, and *powerfull* worke of truth it selfe; No man can know God, but by God; None can know the *Sunne*, but by its owne light; None can know the *truth* of God (so as to build upon it) but by the truth it selfe and the *Spirit* revealing it by its *owne* light to the soule; that soule which hath felt the power of truth in casting it downe, and raising it up againe, will easily bee brought to *rest* upon it; It is neither *education*, nor the authority of *others* that professe the same *truth*, or that we have been so taught by men of *great parts*, &c. will settle the heart, untill we finde an *inward power* and *autho-*

Directions
about tru-
sting.

I.
It must be
by divine
light.

Cap. 18.

rity in the truth it selfe shining in our hearts by its *owne* beames; hence comes unsetlednesse in time of troubles, because we have not a *spirituall* discerning of spirituall things. Supernaturall truths must have a supernaturall power to apprehend them, therefore God createth a spirituall eye and hand of the soule, which is *faith*.

Esay 54-73

In those that are truly converted, all *saving truths* are transcribed out of the *Scripture* into their hearts, *they are taught of God*; So as they find all truths both concerning the *sinfull estate*, and the *gracious and happy estate* of man in *themselves*; they cary a *divinity* in them and about them, so as from a *saving feeling* they can speak of *conversion*, of *sin*, of *grace*, and the *comforts of the Spirit*, &c. and from this acquaintance are ready to yeeld and give up themselves to *truth* revealed, and to *God* speaking by it. *Trust* is never sound but upon a spirituall *conviction* of the truth and goodnesse wee rely upon, for the effecting of which the Spirit of God must likewise *subdue the rebellion and malice*

of

of our *will*, that so it may be sutable and leuell to *divine* things, and rellish them as they are; wee must apprehend the *love of God* and the *fruits of it* as better then life it selfe, and then choosling and cleaving to the same will soone follow; for as there is a fitnesse in *divine truths* to all the necessities of the soule, so the Soule must bee fitted by them to savour and apply them to it selfe; and then from an *harmony* between the soule and that which it applies it selfe unto, there will follow not onely *peace* in the soule, but *joy* and *delight* surpassing any contentment in the world besides.

As there is in God to satisfie the whole soule, so *trust* carries the whole soule to God; this makes *trust* not so easie a matter, because there must bee an exercise of every faculty of the soule or else our trust is *imperfect* and lame, there must be a *knowledge of him* whom we trust, and *why* we trust, an *affiance* and *love*, &c. Onely they that know God will trust in him; not that knowledge alone is sufficient, but because the sweetnesse of *Gods love* is let into the soule

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thereby,

Cap. 18.

2.

By subdu-
ing and
changing
the will.

3.

By earrying
the whole
soule to
God.

Cap. 13.

thereby, which draweth the whole soule to *him*; Wee are bidden to *trust perfectly* in *God*; therefore seeing wee have a *God so full of perfection* to trust in; we should labour to trust perfectly in him.

4.

By putting
cases to
our selves.

And it is good for the exercise of *trust* to put *cases* to our selves of things that probably may fall out, and then returne to our soules to search what strength wee have if such things should come to passe; thus *David* puts cases; perfect *faith* dares put the hardest cases to its soule, and then set *God* against all that may befall it.

psal. 3. 6.
Ps. 1. 46. 3.
Psal. 27. 3.

5.

By fitting
the pro-
mise to e-
very con-
dition of
our lives.

Againe, labour to fit the *promise* to every condition thou art in; there is no *condition* but hath a *promise* sutable, therefore no condition but wherein *God* may bee *trusted*, because his *truth* and *goodnesse* is alwayes the same; And in the promise, looke both to the good *promised*, and to the faithfulnessse and love of the *promiser*; It is not good to looke upon the *difficulty* of the thing wee have a promise against, but who promiseth it, and for whose sake, and so

so

to see all good things *in Christ* made over to us.

We should labour likewise for a *single heart* to trust in God *onely*; there is no readier way to fall than to trust *equally* to two staves, whereof *one* is rotten, and the *other* sound; therefore as in point of *doctrine* wee are to relie upon Christ *onely*, and to make the Scriptures our rule *onely*; So in life and *conversation*, what ever wee make use of, yet wee should *enjoy* and relie upon God *onely*; for either God is trusted *alone* or not at all; those that trust to other things *with God*, trust not *him* but upon *pretence* to carry their *double minds* with lesse check.

Againe, labour that thy soule may answer all the *Relations* wherein it stands to God, by *cleaving* to him, 1. as a *Father* by trusting on his care, 2. as a *teacher* by following his direction, 3. as a *Creator* by dependance on him, 4. as a *husband* by inseparable affection of love to him, 5. as a *Lord* by obedience, &c. And then we may with comfort expect whatsoever good these *Relations* can yeeld:

Cap. 12.

6.

By trust-
ing in
God alone.

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Cap. 18.

yeeld: All which, God regarding more *our* wants, and weaknesse, than *his owne* greatnesse, hath taken upon him. Shall these *Relations* yeeld comfort from the *creature*, and not from *God himselfe*, in whom they are in their highest perfection? Shall God make other *fathers* and *husbands* faithfull, and not be faithfull *himselfe*? All our comfort depends upon labouring to make these *Relations* good to our soules.

8.

By trust-
ing God
for all
things in
all times.

And as we must *wholly* and *only* trust in God, so likewise wee must trust him in all conditions and times, for all things that wee stand in need of, untill that time comes, wherein wee shall stand in need of nothing: for as the same care of God moved him to *save* us, and to *preserve us* in the world till we be put in possession of salvation; So the same *faith* relies upon God for *heaven* and all necessary *provision* till wee comethither; It is the office of *Faith* to quiet our soules in all the necessities of this life, and wee have continuall use of trusting while wee are *here*: For even when we have things, yet God still keeps

Cap. 18.

keepe the blessing of them in his owne hands, to hold us in a continuall dependance upon him : God traines us up this way, by exercising our *trust* in les- ser matters, to fit us for greater ; thus it pleaseth God to keepe us in a depending condition, untill hee see his owne time ; but so good is God that as hee intends to give us what wee *wait for*, so will hee give us the grace and spirit of faith, to *sustaine* our soules in waiting till we enjoy the same. The unrulinesse of a *naturall* spirit is never discovered more, than when God *defers*, therefore we should labour the more not to withdraw our attendance from God.

Further, we must know that the condition of a Christian in this life, is *not* to see what he trusts God for, (*he lives by faith and not by sight*) and yet that there is such a vertue in *faith*, which makes *evident* and present, things to come and *unseene* : Because God where he gives an *eye* of *faith*, gives also a glasse of the *word* to see things *in*, and by seeing of them in the *truth* & *power* of him that *promiseth*, they become *present*, not onely

9.

By trust-
ing God
when it
sees no
helpe.

2 Cor. 5. 7

Cap. 18.

only to the *understanding* to apprehend thē, but to the *will* to rest upon them, & to the *affections* to joy in thē: It is the nature of *faith* to worke, when it *seeth nothing*, and oftentimes best of all *then*, because God shews himselfe more clearly in his *power*, *wisdom*e, & *goodnesse*, at such times; and so his glory shines most, and faith hath nothing else to look upō thē, whereupon it gathers all the forces of the soule together, to fasten upon God.

Why God suffers his children to fall into great extremities.

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3.

4.

It should therefore be the chief care of a Christian to strengthen his *faith*, that so it may answer Gods manner of dealing with him in the worst times; for God usually (1. that he might perfectly mortifie our confidence in the creature, and 2. that he might the more *indeare* his *favours* and make them *fresh* and new unto us, and 3. that the *glory* of deliverance may bee entirely *his*, without the creatures sharing with him, and 4. that our *faith* and *obedience* may bee *tried* to the uttermost, and discovered) suffers his children to fall into great *extremities* before hee will reach forth his hand to helpe them, as in *Iobs* case

case, &c. Therefore Christians should much labour their hearts to *trust* in God in the *deepest extremities* that may befall them, even when *no light* of comfort appears either from *within* or *without*, yea, then (especially) when all other comforts faile ; *despaire* is oft the ground of *hope* ; when the darknesse of the night is thickest , then the morning begins to dawne ; that which (to a man unacquainted with Gods dealings) is a ground of utter *despaire*, the same (to a man acquainted with the waies of God) is a rise of exceeding *comfort* ; for *infinite* power and goodnes can never be at a losse, neither can faith which looks to *that* ever be at a stand ; whence it is that both *God* and *Faith* worke best alone ; In a hopelesse estate a Christian will see some *doore of hope* opened, 1. because God shewes himselfe neere to us, when we stand most in need of him ; *Helpe Lord, for vain is the help of man* : God is never more seen than in the *Mount* ; He *knowes* our *soules* best, & our souls know him best in *adversity* ; then he is most wonderfull in his *Saints*. 2. because our prayers then
are

Cap. 18.
Christians
should
trust God
most in
the worst
times.

Esa. 50. 10.

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I.

Psal. 31. 7.

2.

Cap. 18.

Psalm 118.

Psalm 118.

Psalm 118.

Psalm 118.

10.

By calling
to minde
former ex-
periences
of Gods
love.

Psalm 22. 4.

Psalm 9. 10.

are (*strong cries*) fervent and frequent; God is sure to heare of us at such a time, which pleaseth him well; as delighting to heare the *voice* of his *Beloved*.

For our better encouragement in these sad times, and to helpe our *trust* in God the more, wee should often call to minde the former *experiences*, which either our *selves* or *others* have had of Gods goodnesse, and make use of the same for our spirituall good; *Our Fathers trusted in thee*, (saith the Head of the Church) *and were not confounded*; Gods *truth* and *goodnesse* is unchangeable, *he never leaves those that trust in him*; so likewise in our owne experiences, we should take notice of Gods dealings with us in sundry kindes, how many wayes hee hath refreshed us, and how good wee have found him in our worst times; After wee have once tried *him* and *his truth*, we may safely trust him; God will stand upon his credit, hee never failed any yet, and hee will not begin to breake with us; If his *nature* and his *word*, and his former *dealing* hath beene sure and square, why should our hearts

hearts be wavering: *thy word* (saith the Psalmist) *is very pure* (or tried) *therefore thy servant loveth it*; the word of God is *as silver tried in the furnace, purified seven times*; It is good therefore to observe and lay up Gods dealings; Experience is nothing else, but a multiplied remembrance of former blessings, which will helpe to multiply our faith; tried *truth* and tried *faith* unto it, sweetly agree and answer one another; It were a course much tending to the quickning of the faith of Christians, if they would communicate one to another their mutuall experiences; this hath formerly beene the custome of Gods people. *Come and heare all ye that feare God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soule*; And David urgeth this as a reason to God for *deliverance*; that then *the righteous would compass him about*, as rejoycing in the experience of Gods goodnesse to *him*; The want of this, makes us upon any new triall to call Gods care and love into question, as if hee had never formerly beene good unto us; whereas every
experi-

Cap. 18.
 Psal. 119.
 140.
 Psal. 12.6.

Christians
 should co-
 municate
 their expe-
 riences.
 Psal. 66.19
 70. 20
 142.7

Psal. 142.7

Cap. 18.

experiment of Gods love should refresh our faith upon any fresh onset; God is so good to his children even in this world, that he traines them up by daily renewed *experiences* of his Fatherly care; for besides those many *promises* of good things to *come*, hee gives us some evidence and taste of what wee beleieve *here*; that by that which wee *feele* wee might bee strengthened in that wee *looke for*, that so in both (1. *sense* of what we feele, and 2. *certainty* of what we looke for) we might have full support.

II.
By walking in the
wayes of
God.

But yet we must *trust God*, as he will be trusted; (namely, *in doing good* ;) or else we do not trust him but *tempt* him; Our commanding of our soules to trust in God, is but an *Eccho* of what God commands us *first*; and therefore in the same maner *he* commands us, we should command *our selves*. As God commands us to trust him in doing good, so should wee *commit our soules* to him *in well doing*, and trust him when wee are about his *owne* workes, and not in the workes of darknesse; we may safely expect God in his *wayes of mercy*, when

when we are in his wayes of *obedience*; For *Religion* as it is a doctrine of what is to be *believed*, so it is a doctrine according to *godlinesse*; and the mysteries of *faith* are *mysteries of godlinesse*, because they cannot be *believed*, but they will inforce a godly conversation; where any true impression of them is, there is *holinesse* alwayes bred in that soule; therefore a study of *holinesse* must goe *joyntly* together with a study of *trusting* in God; *faith* lookes not onely to *promises*, but to directions to *duty*, and breeds in the soule a liking of whatsoever pleaseth God; There is a *mutuall* strengthening in things that are good; *trusting* stirres to *duty*, and *duty* *strengthens* *trusting* by increasing our liberty and boldnesse with God.

Againe, wee must maintaine in our soules, a *high esteeme* of the grace of *faith*; the very *triall* whereof is more *precious* than gold, what then is the grace of *faith* it selfe, and the *promises* which it layeth hold on? certainly they transcend in *worth* what ever may draw us from God; whence it is that the soul

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sets

12.

By setting
a high
price upon
Faith.
1 Pet. 1.7.

Cap. 18.

Luk. 17. 6.

Hos. 8. 12.

sets a high price upon them, and on *faith* that beleeveth them; It is impossible that any thing in the world should come betwixt the *heart* and *those things* (if once wee truly lay hold on them) to undermine *faith* or the *comfort* wee have by it; the heart is never drawne to any sinfull *vanity*, or frighted with any terrour of *trouble*, till *faith* first loseth the sight and *estimation* of divine things, and forgets the *necessity* and *excellency* of them. Our Saviour Christ when he would stirre up a desire of *faith* in his Disciples, shewed them the power and excellency of the same; *great things* stirre up *faith* and keepe it above, and *faith* keepes the soule that nothing else can take place of abode in it; when the *great things of God* are brought into the heart by *faith*, what is there in the whole world that can out-bid them? Assurance of these things upon spiritual grounds, over-rules both *sense* and *reason*, or what ever else prevails with carnall hearts.

CAP.

CAP. XIX.

Faith to be prized, and other things undervalued, at least not to be trusted to as the chiefe.

That *faith* may take the better place in the soule, and the soule in God, the heart must continually be taught of what *little worth* all things else are, as *reputation, riches, and pleasures, &c.* and to see their *nothingnesse* in the word of God, and in experience of our selves and others; that so our heart being *weaned* from these things, may *open* it selfe to God, and imbrace things of a higher nature; otherwise *baser things* will be neerer the soule than *faith*, and keepe possession against it, so that *faith* will not bee suffered to set up a throne in the heart; There must bee an *unloosing* of the heart, as well as a *fastning* of it, and God helps us in both: for (besides the word discovering the vanity of all things else out of God) the maine scope of Gods dealing with his children in any danger or affliction what-

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Cap. 19.

soever, is to imbitter all other things but *himselfe* unto them: Indeed it is the power of God *properly* which makes the heart to *trust*, but yet the Spirit of God useth *this way* to bring all things else *out of request with us* in comparison of those inestimable good things, which the soule is *created, redeemed, and sanctified* for; God is very jealous of our *trust*, and can indure no *Idoll of jealousy* to be set up in our hearts. Therefore it behoves us to take notice, not onely of the *deceitfulnesse* of things, but of the deceitfulnesse of *our hearts* in the use of them; Our hearts naturally hang loose from God, and are soone ready to joyne with the *creature*; Now the more we observe our hearts in this, the more wee take them off, and labour to set them where they should be placed; for the more we *know* these things, the lesse we shall *trust* them.

Object.

But may wee not trust in *riches*, and *friends*, and other outward helps at all?

Answ.

Yes, so farre as they are subordinate to God our chiefe stay, with reservation and submission to the Lord; onely

fo

so far, and so long as it shall please him to use them for our good. Because God ordinarily conveyes his help and goodnesse to us by some creature; wee must trust in God to blesse every mercy wee enjoy, and to make all helps serviceable to his love towards us. In a word, wee must *trust* and *use* them *in* and *under* God, and so as if all were taken away yet to thinke God (being *all-sufficient*) can doe without them, whatsoever hee doth by them for our good. *Faith* preserves the *chastity* of the soule, and *cleaving* to God is a spirituall *debt* which it oweth to *him*, whereas cleaving to the *creature*, is spirituall *adultery*.

It is an error in the *foundation* to substitute *false objects* either in *Religion*, or in *Christian Conversation*; for 1. in *religion* trusting in false objects as Saints, & works, &c. breeds false *worship*, and false worship breeds *Idolatry*, and so Gods *jealousie*, and *hatred*. 2. In *Christian Conversation* false objects of trust breeds *false comforts*, & *true feares*; for in what measure wee *trust* in any thing that is *uncertaine*, in the same measure will

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2.

Cap. 19.

James 1.8.

Luk. 16.

13.

Ioh. 5.44.

our griefe be when it failes us; the more men rely upon deccitfull Crutches the greater is their fall; God can neither indure *false objects*, nor a *double object*, (as hath beene shewed) for a man to rely upon any thing *equally* in the same ranke with himselfe; for the propounding of a double object, argues a *double heart*, and a double heart is alwayes *unsettled*, for it will regard God no longer than it can enjoy that which it joynes together with *him*; Therefore it is said, *You cannot serve two Masters*, not subordinate one to another; Whence it was that our Saviour told those *worldly men* which followed him; *that they could not beleeve in him, because they sought his honour one of another*; and in case of competition, if their *honour* and *reputation* should come into question, they would be sure to be false to Christ, and rather part with *him* than their owne credit and esteeme in the world.

David (here) by charging his soule to *trust in God*, saw there was nothing else that could bring true rest and quiet unto him; for whatsoever is *besides* God,

Cap. 19.

God, is but a creature; and what ever is in the creature, is but *borrowed*, and at Gods disposing, and *changeable*, or else it were not a creature; *David* saw his error soone; for the ground of his disquiet was trusting *something else* besides God, therefore when he began to say, *My hill is strong, I shall not be moved, &c.* then presently *his soule was troubled*. Out of God there is nothing fit for the soule to stay it selfe upon; for,

Psal. 30. 6.

1. *Outward things* are not fitted to the *spirituall nature* of the soule; they are *dead things*, and cannot touch it being a *lively spirit*, unlesse by way of taint.

I.

2. They are beneath the worth of the soule, and therefore debase the soul, and draw it lower than it selfe. As a *Noble woman*, by matching with a *meane* person much injures her selfe, especially when *higher matches* are offered. Earthly things are not given for *staves* wholly to rest on, but for *Comforts* in our way to Heaven; they are no more fit for the soule, than that which hath *many angles* is fit to fill up that which

2.

is fit to

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is

Cap. 19.

is *round*, which it cannot doe, because of the unevennesse and void places that will remaine; Outward things are never so well fitted for the soule, but that the soule will presently see some voidnesse and emptinesse in them, and in it selfe in cleaving to them; for that which shall be a fit object for the soule, must be 1. for the nature of it *spirituall*, (as the soule it self is) 2. *constant*, 3. *full*, and *satisfying*, 4. of equall *continuance* with it, and 5. *alwayes yeelding fresh contents*: we cast away *flowers*, after once wee have had the *sweetnesse* of them, because there is not *still* a fresh supply of sweetnesse. What ever comfort is in the *creature*, the soule will spend quickly, and looke still for more; whereas the comfort wee have in God is *undefiled*, and *fades not away*; How can wee trust to *that* for comfort, which by very *trusting* proves uncomfortable to us? Outward things are onely so far forth good, as wee *doe not* trust in them; *thornes* may be *touched*, but not *rested on*, for then they will pierce; we must not set our hearts upon those things which

which are never evill to us, but when we set our hearts upon them.

Cap. 19.
Psal. 62. 10.

By trusting any thing but God, wee make it 1. an *Idoll*, 2. a *curse* and not a *bleſſing*, 3. it will prove a *lying vanity*, not yeelding that good which we look for, and 4. a *vexation*, bringing that evill upon us we looke not for.

Ier. 17. 5.

Of all men *Solomon* was the fitteſt to judge of this, becauſe 1. he had a large heart able to comprehend the variety of things, and 2. (being a mighty King) had advantages of procuring all outward things that might give him ſatisfaction, and 3. he had a deſire anſwerable, to ſearch out and extract what ever good the creature could yeeld; and yet upon the *triall* of all, hee paſſeth this verdict upon all, that they are *but vanity*; whileſt he laboured to finde that which hee ſought for in them, hee had like to have loſt himſelfe; and ſeeking too much to ſtrengthen himſelfe by foreigne combination, hee weakned himſelfe the more thereby, untill hee came to know where the *whole of man* conſiſts. So that now we need not try further

Eccleſ. 1. 2.

Eccleſ. 12.
13.

Cap. 19.

ther conclusions after the peremptory sentence of so wise a man.

But our nature is still apt to thinke there is some secret good in the *forbidden fruit*, and to buy wisdom dearly when wee might have it at a cheaper rate, even from former universall experience.

It is a matter both to be wondred at and pittied, that the soule having God in Christ set before it, alluring it unto him, that he might raise it, enlarge it, and fill it, and so make it above all other things, should yet debase and make it selfe narrower and weaker by leaning to things meaner than it selfe.

The Kingdome, Sovereignty, and large command of *Man*, continueth while he rests upon God, in whom hee raignes (in some sort) over all things under him; but so soone as hee removes from God to any thing else, he becomes weak, and narrow, and slavish presently; for,

The soule is as that which it relies upon; if on *vanity*, it selfe becomes vain; for that which contents the soule must
satisfie

Satisfie all the wants and desires of it, which no particular thing can doe, and the soule is more sensible of a little thing that it wants, than of all other things which it enjoyes.

But see the *insufficiency* of all other things (out of God) to support the soule, in their severall degrees. *First*, All *outward* things can make a man no happier than outward things can doe, they cannot reach beyond their proper spheare: but our *greatest* grievances are *spirituall*. And as for inward things, whether *gifts* or *graces*, they cannot bee a sufficient stay for the minde; for 1. *gifts*, as policy and wisdom, &c. they are at the best very defective, especially when we *trust in them*; for *wisdom* makes men often to *rebell*, and thereupon God delighteth to blast their projects: None miscarry oftner than men of the *greatest parts*; as none are oftner drowned than those that are most *skilfull* in swimming, because it makes them *confident*.

And for *grace*, though it bee the beginning of a new creature in us, yet it is
but

1.

2.

Esa. 47. 10

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but a *creature*, and therefore not to bee trusted in, nay by trusting in it wee imbase it, and make it more *imperfect*; so farre as there is truth of grace, it breeds distrust of our selves, and carries the soule out of it selfe to the fountaine of strength.

3.

And for any workes that proceed from grace, by *trusting* thereunto they prove like the *reed* of *Ægypt*, which not onely deceives us, but hurts us with the splinters: Good workes are *good*, but confidence in them is hurtfull; and there is more of our *owne* in them (for the most part) to humble us, than of Gods Spirit to embolden us so farre as to trust in them. Alas they have nothing from us, but weaknesse and defilement, and therefore *since the fall*, God would have the object of our *trust* to bee (*out of our selves*) *in him*; and to that purpose hee useth all meanes to take us out of *our selves*, and from the *creature* that hee onely might be *our trust*.

4.

Yea wee must not trust *trust it selfe*, but God whom it relies on, who is therefore called our *trust*. All the glori-

ous

ous things that are spoken of *trust* are onely made good by God in Christ, who (as trusted) doth all for us.

God hath prescribed *trust*, as the way to carry our soules to *himselfe*, in whom wee should onely rely, and not in our imperfect *trust*, which hath its ebbing and flowing; Neither will *trust* in God himselfe for the *present* suffice us for *future* strength and grace, as if *trusting* in God *to day*, would suffice to strengthen us for *to morrow*; but wee must *renew* our trust for *fresh* supply, upon every fresh *occasion*. So that wee see God *alone* must bee the *object* of our *trust*.

There is still left in mans nature a desire of *pleasure, profit*, and of whatever the *creature* presents as *good*, but the desire of gracious good is altogether lost, the soule being wholly infected with a contrary taste. Man hath a nature capable of *excellency*, and desirous of it, and the Spirit of God *in* and *by the word* reveals where true excellency is to bee had; but corrupt nature *leaving God*, seeketh it *elsewhere*, and so crosseth its

owne

Cap. 19.

owne desires, till the Spirit of God discovers where these things are to bee had, and so *nature* is brought to its right frame againe, by turning the streame into the right current; *Grace*, and *sinfull nature*, have the same generall object of comfort; onely *sinfull nature* seekes it in broken cisterns, and *grace* in the fountain; the beginning of our true happinesse is from the discovery of true and false objects, so as the soule may cleerely see what is best and safest, and then stedfastly rely upon it.

We should labour to subdue the first inclination of our soules to the creatures.

It were an happy way to make the soule better acquainted with trusting in God, to labour to subdue at the first all unruly inclinations of the soule to earthly things, and to take advantage of the first tenderesse of the soule, to weed out that which is ill, and to plant knowledge and love of the best things in it; otherwise, where affections to any thing below get much strength in the soule, it will by little and little be so overgrowne, that there will bee no place left in it, either for (object or act) God or trust; God cannot come to take his

Cap. 19.

his place in the heart by *trust*, but where the powers of the soule are brought under, to regard *him* and those great things hee brings with him, above all things else in the world beside.

In these glorious times wherein so great a *light* shineth, whereby so great things are discovered, what a shame is it to be so narrow hearted as to fixe up- on *present* things; Our aimes and affe- ctions should bee sutable to the things themselves set before us; Our hearts should be more and more *inlarged*, as things are more and more *revealed* to us; We see in the things of this life, as *wisedome* and *experience* increaseth, so our aimes and desires increase likewise; A young beginner thinkes it a great matter if hee have a little to *beginne* *wishall*, but as he growes in *trading*, and seeth further wayes of getting, his thoughts and desires are raised higher; *Children* thinke as *children*, but *riper* age puts away childishnesse, when their understandings are enlarged to see, what they did not see before; wee should never rest till our hearts according to
the

1 Cor. 13.
11.

Cap. 20.

the measure of *revelation* of those excellent things which God hath for us; have answerable apprehension of the same. Oh if we had but faith to answer those glorious truths which God hath revealed; what manner of lives should we leade?

CAP. XX.

Of the method of trusting in God: and the triall of that trust.

13.
Our trust-
ing should
follow
Gods or-
der of pro-
mise.

LASTly, (to add no more) our *trusting* in God should follow Gods order in *promising*. The first promise is of *forgivenessse of sinne* to repentant beleevers: next 2. of *healing and sanctifying grace*: then 3. *the inheritance of the Kingdome of Heaven to them that are sanctified*: 4. and then the promises of *all things needfull in our way to the Kingdome, &c.* Now answerably, the soule being inlightned to see its danger, should looke first to Gods mercy in Christ *pardoning sinne*, because sinne onely divides betwixt God and the soule; next, to the *promi-*

promises of grace for the leading of a Christian life, for true faith desires healing mercy, as well as pardoning mercy, and then to Heaven and all things that may bring us thither.

By all this wee see that it is not so easie a matter as the world takes it, to bring God and the soule together by trusting on him; It must be effected by the mighty power of God, raising up the soule to himselfe; to lay hold upon the glorious power, goodnesse, and other excellencies that are in him; God is not onely the object, but the working cause of our trust; for such is our pronenesse to live by sense, and naturall reason, and such is the strangenesse and height of divine things, such our inclination to a selfe-sufficiency and contentment in the creature, and so hard a matter is it to take off the soule from false bottomes, by reason of our unacquaintance with God and his wayes; besides such guilt still remaines upon our soules for our rebellion and unkindnesse towards God: that it makes us afraid to entertaine serious thoughts of him; and so

Eph. 1.10.

Cap. 10.

great is the distance betwixt his *infinite* Majesty, (before whom the very *Angels* doe cover their faces) and us, by reason of the *unspiritualnesse* of our nature, being opposite to his most *absolute* purity, that wee cannot bee brought to any *familiarity* with the Lord (so as to come into his holy presence with *confidence* to rely upon him, or any comfort to have communion with him,) till our hearts be sanctified and lifted up by *divine vigour* infused into them.

Though there be some *inclination* by reason of the remainder of the image of God in us, to an outward *morall* obedience of the *Law*, yet alas, we have not onely *no seeds* of *Evangelicall* truths and of faith to beleeve them, but an utter *contrariety* in our *natures* (as corrupted) either to this, or any other good. When our conscience is once awaked, we meditate nothing but *feares* and *terrors*, and dare not so much as think of an angry God, but rather how wee may escape and fly from him. Therefore together with a deepe consideration of the grounds wee have of *trusting* God, it is necessary

necessary wee should thinke of the indisposition of our hearts unto it, especially when there is greatest neede thereof, that so our hearts may be forced to put up that petition of the *Disciples* to God; *Lord increase our faith, Lord helpe us against our unbelieving hearts, &c.* By praier and holy thoughts stirred up in the use of the meanes, wee shall feele divine strength infused and conveyed into our soules to *trust*.

The more care we ought to have to maintaine our trust in God, because (besides the hardnesse of it) it is a radicall and fundamentall grace; it is as it were the *mother root* and great *veine* whence the exercise of all graces have their beginning and strength. The decay of a plant though it *appeares* first from the withering of the twigs and branches, yet it arises chiefly from a decay in the roote; So the decay of grace may appeare to the view first in our *company, carriage, and speeches, &c.* but the primitive and originall ground of the same, is weaknesse of *faith* in the heart, therefore it should bee our wise-

Defects in
life rise
fro defects
in *trust*.

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dome (especially) to looke to the feeding of the *roote*; we must 1. looke that our *principles* and *foundation* bee good, and 2. build strongly upon them, and 3. *repaire* our building every day, as continuall breaches shall be made upon us, either by *corruptions* and *temptations* from *within* or *without*; And wee shall finde that the maine breaches of our lives arise either from *false* principles, or doubts, or *mindlesnesse* of those that are true; All sin is a turning of the soule from God to some other seeming good, but this proceeds from a former turning of the soule from God by distrust. As faith is the first returne of the soule to God, so the first degree of departing from God is by *infidelitie*, and from thence comes a departure by *other sins*, by which (as sinne is of a winding nature) our unbelieve more increaseth, and so the rent and breach betwixt our *soules* and *God* is made greater still, (which is that Satan would have) till at length by departing further and further from him, wee come to have that peremptory sentence of *everlasting departure*

parture pronounced against us ; so that our departure from God *now* is a degree to separation *for ever* from him. Therefore it is Satans maine care to come betweene God and the *Soule*, that so unloosing us from God, wee might more easily be drawne to *other things* ; and if hee drawes us to other things, it is but onely to unloose our hearts from God the more ; for hee well knowes whilest our soules cleave close to God, there is no prevailing against us by any created policy or power.

It was the cursed policy of *Balaam* to advise *Balak* to draw the people from God (by *fornication*) that so God might be drawne from them : the sinne of their base *affections* crept into the very spirits of their minde, and drew them from God to Idolatry : Bodily *adultery* makes way for *spirituall* ; An unbeleeving heart is an ill heart, and a treacherous heart, because it makes us to *depart from God*, the *living God*, &c. Therefore wee should especially take heed of it as wee love our lives, yea our best life which ariseth from the

Cap. 20.

Satans
study is to
unloose
our hearts
from God.

Hcb. 3. 12.

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union of our soules with God.

None so opposed as a *Christian*, and in a Christian nothing so opposed as his *faith*, because it opposeth whatsoever opposes God, both *within* and *without* us: it captivates and brings under whatsoever rises up against GOD in the heart, and sets it selfe against whatsoever makes head against the soule.

And because mistake is very dangerous, and wee are prone to conceive that to *trust in God* is an easie matter, therefore it is needfull that wee should have a right conceit of this *trust* what it is, and how it may be discerned, lest wee trust to an untrusty *trust*, and to an unsteady stay.

What trust
in God is.

We may by what hath been said before, partly discern the *nature* of it, to be nothing else but an exercise of faith, whereby looking to God in CHRIST through the *promises*, wee take off our soules from all other supports, and lay them upon God for deliverance and upholding in all *ill*, *present*, or *future*, felt, or feared, and the obtaining of all
good,

good, which GOD sees expedient for us.

Now that we may discern the *truth* of our *trust in God* the better, wee must know, that true trust is *willing* to be *tried* and *searched*, and can say to God as *David*, *Now Lord what wait I for, my hope is in thee*; and as it is willing to come to triall, so it is able to endure triall, and to hold out in opposition, as appears in *David*; If faith hath a *promise*, it will rely and rest upon it, say flesh and blood what it can to the contrary; true faith is as large as the *promise*, and will take Gods part against whatsoever opposes it.

And as faith singles not out one part of divine truth to beleeve, and rejects another, so it relies upon God for every good thing *one* as well as *another*; the ground whereof is this, The same love of God that intends us heaven, intends us a supply of all necessities that may bring us thither.

A child that beleeves his father will make him *Heire*, doubts not but he will provide him food and nourishment,

Cap. 20.

The triall of trust.

1.

It can and is willing to endure triall.

Psal. 39.7.

2.

It looks to all the promises.

*Fides non eligit ob-
jectum.*

Cap. 29.

and give him breeding suitable to his future condition; It is a vaine pretence to beleeeve that God will give us heaven, and yet leave us to shift for our selves in the way.

3.

It makes
the soule
bold,

1.

Where *trust* is rightly planted, it gives *boldnesse* to the soule in going to God, for it is grounded upon the discovery of Gods love first to us, and seeth a warrant from him for whatsoever it trusts him for; though the things themselves be never so great, yet they are no greater than God is willing to bestow; againe, *trust* is bold, because it is grounded upon the worthinesse of a *Mediator* who hath made way to Gods favour for us, and appeares now in heaven to maintain it towards us.

4.

yet humble

Yet this boldnesse is with *humility*, which carries the soule out of it selfe; and that *boldnesse* which the soule by trust hath with God, is from God himselfe; it hath nothing to alledge from it selfe but its owne emptinesse and Gods fulnesse, its owne sinfulnessse and Gods mercy, its owne humble obedience, and Gods command; hence it is that the
true

true beleevers heart is not lifted up, nor swells with *selfe-confidence*; as trust comes *in* that goes *out*; trust is never planted and growes but in an humble and low soule; trust is a holy *motion* of the soule to God, and motion arises from want; those (and those onely) seek out abroad that want succour at home; *Plants* move not from place to place, because they finde nourishment where they stand; but *living* creatures seeke abroad for their food, and for that end have a power of moving from place to place; and this is the reason why *trust* is expressed by *going* to God.

Hereupon *trust* is a *dependent* grace answerable to our dependent condition; it lookes upon all things it hath or desires to have, as comming from God and his free grace and power; it desireth not onely *wisedome*, but to be wise in *his* wisedome, to see in *his* light, to be strong in *his* strength, the thing it selfe contents not this grace of *trust*, but Gods blessing and love in the thing; it cares not for any thing further than it can have it with Gods favour and good liking.

Hence

Cap. 10.

*Motus ex
indigentia.*

5.
Trust is
dependent.

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6.

and obsequious.

Phil. 2.

12, 13.

Hence it is, that *trust* is an obsequious and an observing grace, stirring up the soule to a desire of pleasing God in all things, and to a feare of displeasing him; Hee that pretends to trust the Lord in a course of offending, may trust to this that God will meet him in another way than hee looks for: Hee that is a tenant at *courtesie* will not offend his Lord; hence it is that the Apostle inforceth that exhortation to *work out our salvation with fear and trembling*, because it is God that worketh the *will* and the *deed*, and according to *his good pleasure*, not *ours*; Therefore *faith* is an effectuall working *grace*, it workes in Heaven with God, it workes *within us* commanding all the powers of the soule, it workes *without us* conquering whatsoever is in the world on the *right hand* to draw us from God, or on the *left hand* to discourage us; it works against *Hell* and the powers of darknesse; and all by vertue of *trusting* as it draweth strength from God; It stirres up all other graces and keeps them in exercise, and thereupon the acts of o-
ther

Cap. 10.

ther graces are attributed to *faith* as *Heb. 11*. It breeds a holy jealousie over our selves, lest wee give God just cause to stop the influence of his grace towards us, so to let us see that wee stand not by our owne strength: Those that take liberty in things they either *know* or *doubt* will displease God, shew they want the *fear* of God, and this want of feare shewes their want of *dependency*, and therefore want of *trust*; dependency is alwayes very respectiue, it studieth contentment and care to comply; this was it made *Enoch walke with God, and study how to please him*; when wee know nothing can doe us good or hurt but *God*, it drawes our chiefe care to approve our selves to him. Obedience of *faith* and obedience of life will goe together; and therefore hee that commits his soule to God to *save*, will commit his soule to God to sanctifie and *guide* in a way of well-pleasing: Not onely the *tame*, but the most savage *creatures*, will bee at the becke of those that feede them, though they are ready to fall violently upon others; disobedience

Heb. 12. 5.

1 Pet. 4.

Cap. 20.

7.

It serveth
Gods pro-
vidence in
the use of
meanes.

bedience therefore is against the principles of *nature*.

This *dependency* is either in the use of meanes, or else when meanes faile us; true *dependency* is exactly carefull of all meanes. When God hath set downe a course of meanes, wee must not expect that God should alter his ordinary course of providence for us; deserved *disappointment* is the fruit of this presumptuous confidence; the more wee depend on a wise Physician, the more wee will observe his *directions*, and bee carefull to use what hee prescribes; yet we must use the meanes as *meanes*, and not set them in Gods room, for that is the way to blast our hopes; The way to have any thing taken away and not blest, is to *set our heart* too much upon it. Too much griefe in parting with any thing, shewes too much trust in the enjoying of it; and therefore he that uses the meanes in *faith* will alwayes joyne prayer unto God, from whom as *every good thing comes*, so likewise doth the *blessing* and successe thereof; where much indeavours is, and little seeking

seeking to God, it shewes there is little trust; the *Widdow* that trusted in God, continued likewise in prayers day and night.

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1 Tim. 5. 5

The best discovery of our not relying too much on meanes, is, when all meanes faile, if wee can still rely upon God, as being still where hee was, and hath wayes of his owne for helping of us, either immediatly from *himselfe*, or by setting a worke *other* meanes (and those perhaps very *unlikely*) such as we thinke not of. God hath wayes of his *owne*. Abraham never honoured God more, than when he trusted in God for a *sonne* against the course of nature, and when hee had a sonne, was ready to *sacrifice him*, upon confidence that God would raise him from the dead againe. This was the *ground* upon which *Daniel* with such great authority reprov'd *Balthazar* that he had not a care to *glorifie God*, in whose hand *his breath was*, and all his wayes. The greatest honour wee can doe unto God, is when wee see *nothing*, but rather all contrary to that wee looke for, *then* to shut our eyes to
inferiour

Gen. 22. 2.

Dan. 9. 23.

Cap. 20.

inferiour things below and looke altogether upon his *Al-sufficiency*; God can convey himselfe more comfortably to us when he pleaseth *without* meanes than *by* meanes. True *trust* as it sets God highest in the soule, so in *danger* and *wants* it hath present recourse to him, as the *Conies* to the *Rocks*.

Pro. 30. 26

8.

It runnes
not before
God.

And because Gods times and seasons are the best, it is an evidence of true *trust* when wee can waite Gods leisure, and not make haste and so runne before God; for else the *more* haste the *worse* speed; God seldome makes any promise to his Children, but he exerciseth their trust in *waiting* long before, as *David* for a *Kingdome*, *Abraham* for a *sonne*, the *whole world* for *Christs coming*, &c.

9.

It stils and
quiets the
soule up-
on good
grounds.

One maine evidence of true *trust* in God *is here in the text*, wee see here it hath a *quieting* and *stilling* vertue, for it stayes the soule upon the fulnesse of Gods *love* joyned with his ability to supply our wants and releeve our necessities, though faith doth not (at the first especially) so stay the soule as to
take

take away all suspicious feares of the contrary: There be so many things in trouble that presse upon the soule, as hinder the joyning of God and it together, yet the prevailing of our unbelief is taken away, the raigne of it is broken. If the touch of Christ in his abasement on earth drew vertue from him, certain it is that *faith* cannot touch Christ in heaven, but it will draw a quieting and sanctifying vertue from him, which will in some measure stop the issues of an unquiet spirit; the Needle in the Compasse will stand North, though with some trembling.

A Ship that lies at Anchor may bee something tossed, but yet it still remains so fastned, that it cannot bee carried away by winde or weather; the soule after it hath cast anchor upon God, may (as we see here in *David*) bee disquieted a while; but this unsetling tends to a deeper setting; the more we *believe*, the more we are *established*; *faith* is an establishing grace, *by faith wee stand*, and stand *fast*, and are able to withstand whatsoever opposeth us. For what can
stand

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stand against God, upon whose truth and power *faith* relies? The devill feares not us, but *him* whom we flie unto for succour; It is the ground wee stand on secures us, not our selves.

As it is our happinesse, so it must be our endeavour to bring the soule close to God, that nothing get betweene, for then the soule hath no sure footing. When wee step from God, Satan steps in by some temptation or other presently. It requires a great deale of *self-deniall*, to bring a soule either swelling with *carnall confidence*, or sinking by fear and *distrust*, to lie leuell upon God, and cleave fast to him; Square will lie fast upon Square; but our hearts are so full of unevennesse, that God hath much adoe to square our hearts fit for him, notwithstanding the soule hath no rest without this.

The use of *trust* is best knowne in the worst times, for naturally in sickness we trust to the Physician, in want to our wit and shifts, in danger to policy and the arme of flesh, in plenty to our present supply, &c. but when wee have

have nothing in view, then indeed should God be *God* unto us. In times of distresse, when he shewes himselfe in the wayes of his mercy and goodnesse, then wee should especially magnifie his name, which will move him to discover his excellencies the more, the more wee take notice of them. And therefore *David* strengthens himselfe in these words, that he hoped for better times, wherein God would shew himselfe more gracious to him, because he resolved to praise him.

This trusting joynts the soule again, and sets it in its own true resting place, and sets God in his owne place in the soule, that is, the highest; and the creature in its place which is to be under God, as in its owne nature, so in our hearts. This is to ascribe *honour due unto God*, the onely way to bring peace into the soule: Thus if wee can bring our hope and trust to the God of hope, and trust, wee shall stand impregnable in all assaults, as will best appeare in these particulars.

Psal. 124.

Aa

CAP.

CAP. XXI.

*Of quieting the spirit in troubles for sin.
And objections answered.*

TO begin with troubles of the spirit, which indeed are the spirit of troubles, as disabling that which should uphold a man in all his troubles. A spirit set in tune, and assisted by a higher spirit, will stand out against ordinary assaults, but when God (the God of the spirits of all flesh) shall seem contrary to our spirits, whence then shall wee finde reliefe?

Here all is spirituall, God a *Spirit*, the soule a *spirit*, the terrours *spirituall*, the Devill who joynes with these, a *spirit*; yea, that which the soule feares for the time to come, is *spirituall*, and not onely spirituall, but *eternall*, unlesse it pleaseth God at length to break out of the thick cloud, wherewith he covers himselfe, and shine upon the soule, as in his owne time he will.

In this estate, comforts themselves are uncomfortable to the soule; it quarrels

rels with every thing, the better things it heares of, the more it is vexed: Oh what is this to me, what I have to doe with these comforts, the more happinesse may be had, the more is my grief; As for comforts from Gods inferiour blessings, as *friends, children, estate, &c.* the soule is ready to misconstrue Gods end in all, as not intending any good to him thereby.

In this condition God doth not appeare in his owne shape to the soule, but in the shape of an enemy; and when God seemes against us, who shall stand for us? Our blessed Saviour in his agony had the *Angels* to comfort him; but had he beene a meere man, and not assisted by the God-head, it was not the comfort (no not) of *Angels* that could have upheld him, in the sense of his Fathers withdrawing his countenance from him. Alas then what will become of us in such a case if we be not supported by a *spirit of power* and the power of an Almighty Spirit?

If all the temptations of the whole world, and hell it selfe were mustered

A 3 2

together,

*Nihil est
tentatio vel
universi
mundi et
societas infer-
ni in auxilium
constata, ad
eā qua Deo
contrarius
hominis pōni-
tur. Luther.*

Cap. 21.

together, they were nothing to this, whereby the great God sets himselfe contrary to his poore creature. None can conceive so, but those that have felt it. If the hiding of his face will so trouble the soule, what will his frowne and angry looke doe? Needs must the soule bee in a wofull plight, when as God seemes not onely to bee absent from it, but an enemy to it. When a man sees no comfort from above, and lookes inward and sees lesse, when hee lookes about him, and sees nothing but evidences of Gods displeasure; beneath him, and sees nothing but desperation, clouds without, and clouds within, nothing but clouds in his condition here, hee had need of faith to break through all, and see Sunne through the thickest cloud.

Upon this, the distressed soule is in danger to be set upon by a temptation, called the temptation of *blasphemy*, that is, to entertaine bitter thoughts against God, and especially against the grace and goodnesse of God, wherein he desires to make himselfe most knowne
to

*Tentatio
blasphemica
yntra.*

to his creature. In those that have wilfully resisted divine truths made knowne unto them, and after taste, despised them, a perswasion that GOD hath forsaken them, set on strongly by Satan, hath a worse effect, it stirs up a hellish hatred against God, carrying them to a revengefull desire of opposing whatsoever is Gods, though not alwayes openly (for then they should lose the advantage of doing hurt,) yet secretly and subtilly, and under pretence of the contrary. To this degree of *blasphemy* Gods children never fall, yet they may fee the venome of corruption stirring in their hearts, against God and his waies which he takes with them; and this addes greatly to the depth of their affliction, when afterward they thinke with themselves what hellish stuffe they carry in their soules. This is not so much discerned in the temptation, but after the fit is somewhat remitted.

In this kinde of desertion, seconded with this kinde of temptation, the way is to call home the soule, and to check

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Jonas 2.4.

Isa. 50. 10.

it, and charge it to trust in God, even though hee shewes himselfe an enemy, for it is but a *shew*, hee doth but put on a maske with a purpose to reveale himselfe the more graciously afterward; his manner is to work by contraries. In this condition God lets in some few beams of light, whereby the soule casts a longing looke upon God, even when hee seemes to forsake it; it will with *Jonas* in the belly of hell, looke back to the holy Temple of God, it will steale a looke unto Christ. Nothing more comfortable in this condition, than to flye to him, that by experience knew what this kind of forsaking meant, for this very end that hee might bee the fitter to succour us in the like distresse.

Learne therefore to appeale from God to God, oppose his gracious nature, his sweet promises to such as *are in darknesse, and see no light*, inviting them to trust in him, though there appeare to the eye of sense and reason nothing but darknesse: Here make use of that sweet Relation of God in Christ, becomming a Father to us: *Doublesse thou*

thou art our Father : flesh would make a doubt of it, and thou seemest to hide thy face from us, yet *doubtlesse* thou art our Father, and hast in former time shewed thy selfe to bee so, wee will not leave thee till wee have a blessing from thee, till wee have a kinder looke from thee: This *wrassling* will prevaile at length, and wee shall have such a sight of him, as shall bee an encouragement for the time to come, when *wee shall bee able to comfort others, with those comforts whereby we have been refreshed our selves.* With the Saints case remember the Saints course, which is *to trust in God.* So Christ the Head of the Church commits himselfe to that God, whose favour for the present hee felt not ; So *Job* resolves upon *trust* though G O D should *kill him.*

Cap. 21.
Isa. 63. 16.

2 Cor. 1. 4.

But these holy persons were not troubled with the guilt of any particular sinne, but I feele the just displeasure of God kindled against me for many and great offences.

Object.

True it is, that sinne is not so sweet in the committing, as it is heavy and bitter in the reckoning. When *Adam*

Ans.

Cap. 21.

1 Cor. 5.
21.

Psal. 38.

had once offended God, *Paradise* it self was not *Paradise* to him. The presence of God which was most comfortable before, was now his greatest terror, had not God out of his free infinite and preventing mercy come betwixt him and hell, by the promise of the blessed Seed. This Seed was *made sinne* to satisfie for sin; *sin passive* in himselfe, to satisfie for *sin active* in us.

When God once charges sinne upon the soule, Alas who shall take it off? When the great God shall frowne, the smiles of the creature cannot refresh us. Sinne makes us afraid of that which should be our greatest comfort; it puts a sting into every other evill, upon the seazing of any evill, either of body, soule, or condition, the guilty soule is imbittered and enraged; for from that which it feesles, it fore-speakes to it selfe worse to come. It interprets all that befalls, as the messengers of an angry God, sent in displeasure to take revenge upon it. This weakneth the courage, wasteth the spirits, and blasteth the beauty even of Gods dearest ones.

There

There is not the stoutest man breathing, but if God sets his conscience against him, it will pull him downe, and lay him flat, and fill him with such inward terrors, as he shall be more afraid of himselfe, than of all the world beside. This were a dolefull case, if God had not provided in Christ a remedy for this great evill of evils, and if the holy Spirit were not above the conscience, able as well to pacifie it by the sense of Gods love in Christ, as to convince it of sinne, and the just desert thereby.

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But my sins are not the sins of an ordinary man, my spots are not as the spots of the rest of Gods children.

Object.

Conceive of Gods mercy as no ordinary mercy, and Christs obedience as no ordinary obedience. There is something in the very greatnesse of sin, that may encourage us to goe to God, for the greater our sinnes are, the greater the glory of his powerfull mercy in pardoning, and his powerfull grace in healing will appeare. The great God delights to shew his greatnesse in the greatest

Ans.

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Mic. 7. 18.

greatest things ; Even men glory, when they are put upon that, which may set forth their worth in any kinde. God *delighteth* in mercy, it *pleaseth* him (nothing so well) as being his chiefe *Name*, which then we take in *vaine*, when wee are not moved by it to come unto him.

Psal. 51.

That which Satan would use as an argument to drive us from God, wee should use as a strong Plea with him. Lord, the greater my sins are, the greater will bee the glory of thy pardoning mercy. *David* after his hainous sinnes, cries not for *mercy*, but for *abundance* of mercy, *according to the multitude of thy mercies, doe away mine offences*: his mercy is not onely above his *own* works, but above ours too. If we could sinne more than hee could pardon, then wee might have some reason to despaire. Despaire is a high point of *Atheisme*, it takes away God and Christ both at once. *Indas* in betraying our Saviour, was an occasion of his death as *man*, but in despairing hee did what lay in him to take away his life as *God*.

When therefore *Conscience* joyning
with

with Satan, sets out thy sinne in its colours, labour thou by faith to set out *God* in his colours, infinite in mercy and loving kindnesse. Here lies the art of a Christian; It is divine Rhetorick thus to perswade and set downe the soule. Thy sinnes are great, but *Adams* was greater, who being so newly advanced above all the creatures, and taken into so neare an acquaintance with *God*, and having ability to persist in that condition if hee would, yet willingly overthrew himselfe and all his whole posterity, by yeelding to a temptation, which though high (as being promised to bee like unto *God*,) yet such as hee should and might have resisted; No sinne we can commit, can bee a sinne of so tainting and spreading a nature, yet as he fell by *distrust*, so he was recovered by *trusting*, and so must we by relying on a second *Adam*, whose obedience and righteousness *from thence raignes*, to the taking away not onely of that one sinne of *Adam*, and ours in him, *but of all*, and not onely to the pardon of all sinne, but to a right of everlasting

Rom. 5. 17

Cap. 21.

Gods mercy not to be limited.

Isay 55.8.

lasting life. The Lord thinks himselfe disparaged, when wee have no higher thoughts of *his mercy*, than of our *sins*, when we bring God downe to our Model, when as, *the heavens are not so much higher than the earth, than his thoughts of love and goodnesse, are above the thoughts of our unworthinesse*. It is a kinde of taking away the Almighty, to limit his boundlesse mercy in Christ, within the narrow scantling of our apprehension; yet *infidelity* doth this, which should stirre up in us a loathing of *it* above all other finnes. But this is Satans fetch, when once he hath brought us into sins against the *Law*, then to bring us into finnes of a higher nature, and deeper danger, even against the blessed *Gospel*, that so there may bee no remedy, but that Mercy it self might condemne us.

All the aggravations, that conscience and Satan helping it, are able to raise sinne unto, cannot rise to that degree of infinitenesse, that Gods mercy in Christ is of. If there be a *spring* of sin in us, there is a spring of mercy in him, and a fountaine opened daily to wash
our

our selves in. If we sin oft, let us doe as *S. Paul*, who *prayed oft against the prick of the flesh*. If it be a devill of long continuance, yet fasting and prayer will drive him out at length.

Nothing keepes the soule more downe, than finnes of long continuance, because corruption of nature hath gotten such strength in them, as *nature* is added *to nature*, and custome doth so determine and sway the soule one way, that men thinke it impossible to recover themselves, they see one linke of sin draw on another, all making a chain to fasten them to destruction, they thinke of necessity they must be damned because custome hath bred a necessity of sinning in them; and conceive of the promise of mercy, as onely made to such as turne from their sinfull courses, in which they see themselves so hardened, that they cannot repent.

Certaine it is, the condition is most lamentable, that yeelding unto sinne brings men unto. Men are carefull to prevent dangerous sicknesses of *body*, and the danger of law concerning their *estates*;

Cap. 21.
Zach. 13.1

Isay 59. 8.
Sinnes of
continu-
ance dan-
gerous.

Cap. 21.

estates; but seldome consider into what a miserable plight their sinnes which they so willingly give themselves up unto, will bring them in. If they doe not perish in their sins, yet their yeelding will bring them into such a dolefull condition; that they would give the whole world, if they were possessours of it, to have their spirits at freedome from this bondage and feare.

To such as blesse themselves in an ill way upon hope of mercy, wee dare not speake a word of comfort, because God doth not, but threatens, his wrath shall burne to hell against them. Yet because while life continues there may bee as a *space*, so a *place*, & *grace* for repentance, these must bee dealt withall in such a maner as they may be stayed and stopped in their dangerous courses, there must be a stop before a turne.

And when their consciences are thoroughly awaked with sence of their danger, let them seriously consider whither sinne, and Satan by sin is carrying of them, and lay to heart the justice of God, standing before them as an Angell.

How to
deale with
such, as
have lived
long in
sinne.

gell with a drawne sword, ready to fall upon them if they post on still.

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Yet to keep them from utter sinking, let them consider withall, the unlimited meroy of God, as not limited to any person, or any sinne, so not to any time; there is no prescription of time can binde God, his mercy hath no certaine date that will expire, so as those that fly unto it, shall have no benefit. Invincible mercy will never be conquered, and endlesse goodnesse never admits of bounds or end.

Penitus invicta non vincitur, et infinita misericordia non finitur.
Fulgent.

What kinde of people were those that followed CHRIST, were they not such as had lived long in their sinfull courses? Hee did not onely raise them that were newly dead, but LAZARUS that had lyen *fourre dayes in the grave*. They thought Christs power in raising the dead, had reached to a short time onely, but hee would let them know, that hee could as well raise those that had been *long* as lately dead. If Christ be the Physitian, it is no matter of how long continuance the disease be. Hee is good at all kinde of diseases, and will

not

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not endure the reproach of disability to cure any. Some diseases are the reproaches of other Physitians, as being above their skill to help, but no conceit more dangerous when wee are to deale with Christ.

“The blessed Martyr *Bilney* was
 “much offended when he heard an elo-
 “quent Preacher inveighing against
 “sinne, saying thus, Behold, thou hast
 “lien rotten in thy owne lusts, by the
 “space of sixty years, even as a beast
 “in his owne dung, and wilt thou pre-
 “sume in one yeare to goe forward to-
 “wards heaven, and that in thine olde
 “age, as much as thou wentest back-
 “ward from heaven to hell in sixty
 “yeares? Is not this a goodly argu-
 “ment (saith *Bilney*?) Is this preach-
 “ing of repentance in the name of Je-
 “sus? It is as if Christ had died in
 “vaine for such a man, and that hee
 “must make satisfaction for himselfe.
 “If I had heard (saith he) such preach-
 “ing of repentance in times past, I had
 “utterly despaired of mercy: We must
 never thinke the doore of hope to bee
 shut

shut against us, if we have a purpose to turne unto God. As there is nothing more injurious to Christ, so nothing more foolish and groundlesse than to distrust, it being the chiefe scope of God in his word to draw our trust to him in CHRIST, in whom is alwaies open a breast of mercy for humbled sinners to fly unto.

But thus farre the consideration of our long time spent in the Devils service should prevaile with us, as to take more shame to our selves, so to resolve more strongly for God and his wayes, and to account it more than sufficient that wee have spent already, so much precious time to so ill purposes; and the lesse time wee have, to make the more haste, to worke for God, and bring all the honour wee can to Religion in so little a space. O how doth it grieve those that have felt the gracious power of Christ in converting their soules, that ever they should spend the strength of their parts in the worke of his and their enemy. And might they live longer, it is their full purpose for ever to

B h

renounce

Cap. 21.

renounce their former waies. There is bred in them an eternall desire of pleasing God, as in the wicked there is an eternall desire of offending him, which eternity of desires God looks to in both of them, and rewards them accordingly, though he cuts off the thred of their lives.

But God in wisdom will have the conversions of such as have gone on in a course of sinning (especially after light revealed) to be rare and difficult. Birthes in those that are ancients, are with greater danger than in the younger sort. God will take a course that his grace shall not be turned into wantonnesse. He oft holds such upon the rack of a troubled conscience, that they and others may feare to buy the pleasure of sinne at such a rate. Indeed where sinne abounds, there grace superabounds, but then it is where sinne that abounded in the life, abounds in the conscience in griefe and detestation of it, as the greatest evill. Christ groaned at the raising of *Lazarus*, which he did not at others, because that though to an Almighty power

*Cavendum
est vitium,
quod dolore
curatur.*

power all things are alike easie, yet hee will shew that there bee degrees of difficulties in the things themselves, and make it appeare to us that it is so. Therefore those that have enjoyed long the sweet of sinne, may expect the bitterest sorrow and repentance for sinne.

Yet never give place to thoughts of *despaire*, as coming from him that would overturne the end of the Gospel; which layes open the riches of Gods mercy in CHRIST; which riches none set out more than those that have beene *the greatest of sinners*, as wee see in *Paul*. We cannot exalt God more than by taking notice, and making use of that great designe of infinite wisdom in reconciling justice and mercy together, so as now he is not onely mercifull, but *just in pardoning sinnes*. Our Saviour as he came towards the latter age of the world, when all things seemed desperate, so hee comes to some men in the latter part of their dayes. The mercy shewed to *Zachew*, and the good theefe was personall, but the comfort intend.

Revel. 3. 16

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ed by Christ was publike, therefore still
still trust in God,

In this case wee must goe to God,
 with whom all things are possible, to
 put forth his Almighty power, not on-
 ly in the pardoning, but in subduing
 our iniquities. Hee that can make a Ca-
 mell goe thorow a needles eye, can make
 a high conceited man lowly, a rich man
 humble, Therefore never question his
 power, much lesse his willingnesse,
 when hee is not onely ready to receive
 us when we returne, but perswades and
 intreates us to come in unto him, yea
 after *back sliding* and false dealing with
 him, wherein hee allowes no mercy to
 bee showed by man, yet hee will take li-
 berty to shew mercy himselfe.

Ier. 3. 2.

Object.

*But I have often relapsed and fallen into
 the same sin againe and againe.*

Answ.

If Christ will have us pardon our
 brother seventy seven times, can wee
 thinke that hee will enioyne us more,
 then he will bee ready to doe himselfe,
 when in case of shewing mercy hee
 would have us thinke his thoughts to
 be farre above ours, *Adam* lost all by

once

once sinning, but we are under a better covenant, a covenant of mercy, and are encouraged by the Sonne to goe to the Father every day for the finnes of that day.

Where the worke of grace is begun, sin loses strength by every new fall; for hence issues deeper humility, stronger hatred, fresh indignation against our selves, more experience of the deceitfulness of our hearts, renewed resolutions untill sin be brought under. That should not drive us from God, which God would have us make use of, to flie the rather to him, since there is a throne of grace set up in Jesus Christ wee may boldly make use of, and let us bee ashamed to sinne, and not ashamed to glorifie Gods mercy in begging pardon for sinne. Nothing will make us more ashamed to sin, then thoughts of so free and large mercy. It will grieve an ingenuous spirit to offend so good a God. Ah that there should bee such an heart in mee, as to tire the patience of God, and damme up his goodnesse, as much as in me lies; but this is our com-

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fort, that the plea of mercy from a broken spirit to a gracious Father, will ever hold good. When wee are at the lowest in this world, yet there are these three grounds of comfort still remaining. 1. That wee are not yet in the place of the damned, whose estate is unalterable. 2. That whilest we live, there is time and space for recovering of our selves. 3. That there is grace offered, if wee will not shut our hearts against it.

Object.

O, but every one hath his time, my good houre may be past.

Answ.

That is counsell to thee, it is not past if thou canst raise up thy heart to God, and embrace his goodnesse. Shew by thy yeelding unto mercy, that thy time of mercy is not yet out; rather than by concluding uncomfortably, willingly betray thy selfe to thy greatest enemy, enforcing that upon thy selfe, which God labours to draw thee from. As in the sinne against the Holy Ghost, *fear* shewes that wee have not committed it: So in this, a tender heart fearing lest our time bee past, shewes

shewes plainly that it is not past.

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Looke upon examples, when the Prodigall in his forlorne condition was going to his Father, his *Father* stayed not for him, but *meets him* in the way, he did not onely goe, but *ranne* to meet him. God is more willing to entertaine us, than wee are to cast our selves upon him. As there is a *fountaine opened for sinne, and for uncleannesse*, so it is a *living fountaine of living water*, that runnes for ever, and can never bee drawne dry.

Luke 15.

Here remember, that I build not a shelter for the presumptuous, but onely open an harbour for the truly humbled soule, to put himselfe into.

Cautious

Cap. 22.

CAP. XXII.

*Of sorow for sin, and hatred of sinne, when
right and sufficient. Helps thereto.*

Object.

AH, there's my misery. If I could bee humbled for sinne, I might hope for mercy, but I never yet knew what a broken heart meant, this soule of mine was never as yet sensible of the grief and smart of sin, how then can I expect any comfort?

Answ.

I.

Sorow not
required
for it selfe
as sorow.

It is one of Satans policies, to hold us in a dead and barren condition, by following us with conceits, that wee have not sorowed in proportion to our offences. True it is, wee should labour that our sorow might in some measure answer to the hainousnesse of our sins: but we must know, *sorow* is not required for it selfe in that degree as *faith* is: If we could trust in God without much sorow for our sins, then it would not be required, for God delights not in our sorow as sorow, God in mercy both requires it and workes it, as thereby making us capable vessels of mercy, fit to acknowledge, value, and walke worthy of

of Christ; he requires it as it is a meanes to imbitter sinne, and the delightfull pleasures thereof unto us, and by that meanes bring us to a right judgement of our selves, and the creature, with which sinne commits spirituall adultery, that so we may recover our taste before lost. And then, when with the Prodigall wee returne unto our selves (having lost our selves before) wee are fit to judge of the basenesse of sin, and of the worth of mercy; and so upon grounds of right reason, bee willing to alter our condition, and embrace mercy upon any terms it shall please Christ to injoyne.

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Secondly, if we could grieve and cast downe our selves beneath the earth, as low as the nethermost pit, yet this would be no satisfaction to God for sin; of it selfe, it is rather an entrance, and beginning of hell.

Ans. 2.

The greatest sorrow can make no satisfaction for sinne.

Thirdly, we must search what is the cause of this want of griefe which wee complaine of; whether it be not a secret cleaving to the creature, and too much contentment in it, which oft stea-

Ans. 3.

leth

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leth away the heart from God, and brings in such contentment, as is subject to faile and deceive us, whereupon from discontentment, we grieve, which griefe (being carnall) hinders griefe of a better kinde.

Causes of
our Want
of griefe
for sinne.

I.

Want of
considera-
tion.

Use of
crosses.

Usually the causes of our want of griefe for sin are these. First, a want of serious consideration, and dwelling long enough upon the cause of griefe, which springs either from an unsetlednesse of nature, or distractions from things without. Moveable dispositions are not long affected with any thing. One maine use of crosses, is to take off the soule from that it is dangerously set upon, and to fixe our running spirits. For though griefe for crosses hinder spirituall grief, yet worldly delights hinder more. That griefe is lesse distant from true griefe, and therefore neerer to bee turned into it.

2.

Want of
a divine
worke.

And put case wee could call off our mindes from other things, and set them on griefe for our sinnes, yet it is onely Gods Spirit that can worke our hearts to this griefe, and for this end,
perhaps

Cap. 12.

perhaps God holds us off from it, to teach us, that hee is the teacher of the heart to grieve. And thereupon it is our duty to wait, till he reveale our selves so farre to our selves, as to stir up this affection in us.

Another cause may bee a kinde of doublenesse of heart, whereby wee would bring two things together that cannot suit. We would grieve for sinne so farre as wee think it an evidence of a good condition; but then, because it is an irksome taske, and because it cannot bee wrought without severing our heart from those sweet delights it is set upon: hence wee are loath God should take that course to worke griefe, which crosseth our disposition. The soule must therefore by selfe-deniall bee brought to such a degree of *sincerity* and *simplicity*, as to bee willing to give God leave to worke *this sorrow, not to be sorrowed for*, by what way he himselve pleaseth. But here we must remember againe, that this *selfe-deniall*, is not of our selves, but of God, who onely can take us out of our selves, and if our hearts

3.
A kinde of
doublenes
of heart.

Self-denial

2 Cor. 7.

10.

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hearts were brought to a 'stooping herein to his worke, it would stop many a crosse, and continue many a blessing which God is forced to take from us, that hee may work that grieve in us, which he seeth would not otherwise be kindly wrought.

4.

God giveth some larger spirits, and so their sorowes become larger. Some upon quicknesse of apprehension, and the ready passages betwixt the braine and the heart, are quickly moved: where the apprehension is deeper, and the passages slower, there sorow is long in working, and long in removing. The deepest waters have the stillest motion. Iron takes fire more slowly than stubble, but then it holds it longer.

5.

Because
God sets
not grieve
so fit for
one dispo-
sition as
another.

Againe, *God that searches and knowes our hearts* (better then our selves) *knowes when and in what measure it is fit for to grieve*: Hee sees it fitter for some dispositions, to goe on in a constant grieve. We must give that honour to the wisdom of the great Physitian of soules, to know best how to mingle and minister his potions. And we must not bee
so

so unkinde to take it ill at Gods hands, when hee (out of gentlenesse and forbearance) ministers not to us that churlish Physick hee doth to others, but cheerfully embrace any potion that he thinks fit to give us.

Some holy men have desired to see their sinne in the most ugly colours, and God hath heard them in their requests. But yet his hand was so heavy upon them, that they went alwayes mourning to their very graves; and thought it fitter to leave it to Gods wisdom to mingle the potion of sorrow, than to be their own choosers. For a conclusion then of this point, If wee grieve that we cannot grieve, and so far as it is sinne, make it our griefe: then put it amongst the rest of our sinnes, which we beg pardon of, and helpe against, and let it not hinder us from going to Christ, but drive us to him. For, herein lyes the danger of this temptation, that those who complaine in this kinde, thinke it should be presumption to goe to Christ: as when as hee especially calleth *the weary & heavy laden sinner*

Earnest
desire of
too much
sorrow for
sin dangerous.

Mr. Leaver

from all
distresses
to rest
in Christ
by grace
and love

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to come unto him, and therefore such as are sensible that they are not sensible enough of their sin, must know, *though want of feeling bee quite opposite to the life of grace? yet sensibleneſſ of the want of feeling, shews some degree of the life of grace.*

The safest way in this case is, from that life and light that God hath wrought in our soules, to see and feele this want of feeling, to cast our selves and this our indisposition, upon the pardoning and healing mercy of God in Christ:

Caution

Wee speake onely of those that are so farre displeased with themselves for their ill temper, as they doe not favour themselves in it, but are willing to yeeld to Gods way in redressing it, and do not crosse the Spirit; moving them thus with *David* to check themselves, and to trust in God. Otherwise; an unfeeling and carelesse state of spirit will breed a secret shame of going to God; for removing of that wee are not hearty in labouring against, so far as our conscience tels us we are enabled.

The most constant state of the soule, in regard of sinne.

The most constant state the soule can bee in, in regard of sinne, is, upon judgement

judgement to condemne it upon right grounds, and to resolve against it. Whereupon *repentance* is called *an after wisdom and change of the minde*. And this disposition is in Gods children at all times. And for *affections*, love of that which is *good*, and *hatred* of that which is *evill*; these likewise have a settled continuance in the soule. But, *griefe* and *sorrow* rise and fall as fresh occasions are offered, and are more lively stirred up upon some lively representation to the soule of some hurt wee receive by sinne, and wrong wee doe to God in it. The reason hereof is, because till the soule be separated from the body, these *affections* have more communion with the body, and therefore they carry more outward expressions, than dislike, or abomination in the minde doth. Wee are to judge of our selves more by that which is constant, then by that which is ebbing and flowing.

But, what is the reason that the affections doe not alwaies follow the judgement, and the choice or refusall of the will?

Quest.

Our soule being a finite substance, is
caried

Ans.

I.

Cap. 12.

carried with strength but one way at one time.

2. Sometime God calls us to joy as well as to grieve: and then no wonder if grieve be somewhat to seeke.

3. Sometimes when God calleth to grieve, and the judgement and will goeth along with God, Yet the heart is not alwayes ready, because (it may be) it hath run out so far, that it cannot presently be called in againe.

4. Or, *the spirits* (which are the instruments of the soule) may bee so wasted, that they cannot hold out to feed a strong grieve: in which case, the conscience must rest in our settled judgement and hatred of ill; which is the surest and never-failing Character of a good soule.

A never-failing character of a good soule.

5. *Oft times God in mercy takes us off from grieve and sorrow, by refreshing occasions*: because sorrow and grieve are affections very much afflicting both of body and soule.

Quest.

When is godly sorrow in that degree wherein the soule may stay it selfe from uncomfortable thoughts about its condition?

When

When we finde strength against that sin which formerly we fell into, and ability to walke in a contrary way: for this answers Gods end in griefe, one of which is, a prevention from falling for the time to come. For God hath that affection in him which hee puts into Parents, which is by smart to prevent their childrens boldnesse of offending for the time to come.

2. *When that which is wanting in griefe, is made up in feare. Here there is no great cause of complaint of the want of griefe, for this holy affection is the awband of the soule, whereby it is kept from starting from God and his wayes.*

3. *When after griefe wee finde inward peace; for true griefe being Gods worke in us, hee knowes best how to measure it. Therefore, whatsoever frame God brings my soule into, I am to rest in his goodnesse, and not except against his dealing. That peace and joy, which riseth from griefe in the use of meanes, and makes the soule more humble and thankfull to God, and lesse*

Cap. 22.

Ans^r.

I.

When the soule is sufficiently humbled.

2.

Feare is the awband of the soul.

3.

Cap. 11.

censorious and more pitifull to others; is no illufion, nor falfe light.

4.

The maine end of grieve and sorrow is, to make as value the grace and mercy of God in Christ, above al the contentments which sinne feeds on. Which where it is found, we may know that grieve for sinne, hath enough possessed the soule before. The sufficiency of things is to be judged by an answerableness to their use and ends: God makes sinne bitter, that CHRIST may be sweet: *that measure of grieve and sorrow is sufficient, which brings us, and holds us to Christ.*

5.

Hatred, being the strongest, deepest, and steadiest affection of the soule against that which is evill; Grieve for sin is then right, when it springs from hatred, and encreaseth further hatred against it.

How to
know that
we hate sin
rightly.

1.

Now the soule may bee knowne to hate sin, when it seeks the utter abolishing of it, for hatred is an implacable, and irreconcilable affection.

2.

True *hatred* is carried against the whole kinde of sinne, without respect of any wrong done to us, but only out of a meere

meere *Antipathy*, and contrariety of disposition to it. As the Lambe hateth the whole kinde of Wolves, and man hateth the whole kinde of Serpents. A Toad does us no harme, but yet wee hate it.

Cap. 24.

That which is hatefull to us, the nearer it is, the more wee shun and abhorre it, as venomous Serpents, and hurtfull creatures, because the neerenesse of the object affects us more deeply. Therefore, if our griefe spring from true hatred of sinne, it will make no new league with it, but grieve for all sinne, especially for our owne particuler sins, as being contrary to the worke of Gods grace in us, *then* is *griefe* an affection of the new creature, and every way of the right breed.

3.

But for fuller satisfaction in this case, wee must know *there is sometimes griefe for sin in us, when we thinke there is none:* it wants but stirring up by some quickning word; the remembrance of Gods favours and our unkindnesse, or the awaking of our consciences by some crosse, will raise up this affection fee-

4.

Ce 2

lingly

Cap. 22.

What wee
must doe
in want of
griefe for
sinne.

1.

2.

Esay 63.

lingly in us. As in the affection of *love*, many thinke that they have no love to God at all : yet let God be dishonoured in his *Name, truth, or children*, and their love will soone stir and appeare in just anger.

In want of griefe for sinne, wee must remember, 1. *That wee must have this affection from God, before we can bring it unto God.*

And therefore, in the second place, Our chiefe care should bee, not to harden our hearts against the motions of the Spirit, stirring us to seasonable griefe, for that may cause a *judiciall hardnesse* from God. God oft inflicteth some spirituall judgement (as a correction upon men ;) for not yeelding to his Spirit at the first, they feelee a hardnesse of heart growing upon them : This made the Church complaine, *Why hast thou hardened our hearts from thy feare?* which if *Christians* did well consider, they would more carefully entertaine such impressions of sorrow, as the Spirit in the use of the meanes, and observation of Gods dealing towards themselves

themselves or others, shall worke in them, then they doe. It is a saying of *Austen*, *Let a man grieve for his sinne, and joy for his grieve*. Though wee can neither *love* nor *grieve*, nor *joy* of our selves, as we should, yet our hearts tell us, wee are often guilty of giving a check to the Spirit, stirring these affections in us, which is a maine cause of the many sharpe afflictions wee endure in this life, though Gods love in the maine matter of salvation be most firme unto us.

Wee must not thinke to have all this grieve at first, and at once, for oftentimes it is deeper after a sight and feeling of Gods love then it was before. God is a free Agent, and knowes every mans severall mould, and the severall services he is to use them in, and oft takes liberty afterwards to humble men more (when he hath inabled them better to beare it) then in their first entrance into Religion: Griefe before springs commonly from selfe-love, and feare of danger. Let no man suspect his estate because God spares him in the begin-

3.

All a
Christians
griefe is
not at first.

Cap. 22.

Griefe ariseth not alwayes from our poring on sinne.

ning. For Christians many times meet with greater trialls after their conversion than ever they thought on. *When men take little fines, they meane to take the greater rent.* God will have his children first or last to feeble what sinne is; and how much they are beholding to him for Christ.

This griefe doth not alwayes arise from poring on sin, but by oft considering of the infinite goodnesse of God in Christ, and thereby reflecting on our owne unworthinesse, not onely in regard of sinne past, but likewise of the sinne that hangeth upon us, and issues dayly from us. The more holy a man is, the more hee sees the holinesse of Gods nature, with whom he desires to have communion, the more he is grieved that there should be any thing found in him, displeasing to so pure a Majesty.

And as all our griefe comes not at first, so God will not have it come all at once, but to be a streame alwayes running, fed with a spring, yet within the bankes, though some times deeper, sometimes shallower. Griefe for sinne is

is like a constant streame; grieve for other things is like a torrent, or swelling waters, which are soon up, soone down, what it wants in greatnesse, is made up in continuance.

Againe, *If wee watch not our nature, there will be a spice of Popery (which is a naturall Religion) in this great desire of more grieve: as if we had that, then we had something to satisfie God withall, and so, our mindes will runne too much upon workes. This grieve must not onely be wrought by God revealing our sinne, and his mercy unto us in Christ: But when it is wrought, wee must altogether rest (in a sense of our owne emptinesse) upon the full satisfaction and worthinesse of Christ our Saviour.*

All this that hath beene said, tends not to the abating of our desire to have a tender and bleeding heart for sinne: but that in the pursuit of this desire, we be not cast downe so as to question our estates, if wee feele not that measure of grieve which wee desire and endeavour after: Or, to refuse our portion of joy

4.

That there may be a spice of Popery in this our earnest desire of much grief

The scope of this discourse of grieve.

Cap. 23.

Matt. 5.

which God offers us in Christ. Considering, griefe is no further good, than it makes way for joy: which caused our Saviour to joyne them together: *Blessed are the mourners, for they shall be comforted.* Being thus disposed, we may commit our soules to God in peace, notwithstanding Satans troubling of us in the houre of temptation.

CAP. XXIII.

Other spirituall causes of the soules trouble discovered, and removed: and objections answered.

That the great conflict in us betwixt grace and corruption doth also much cast us downe. *Proximiorii odia sunt acerbissima.*

ANother thing that disquiets and casts downe the soule very much, is, that inward conflict betwixt *grace* and *corruption*: this makes us most worke, and puts us to most disquietment. It is the trouble of troubles to have two inhabitants so neare in one soule, and these to strive one against another, in every action, and at all times in every part and power in us: the one carying us upward, higher and higher

higher still, till wee come to God : the other pulling us lower and lower, further from him. *This cannot but breed a great disquiet, when a Christian shall bee put on to that which he would not, and hindered from that which hee would doe, or troubled in the performance of it.* The more light there is to discerne, and life of Grace to be sensible hereof ; and the more love of Christ, and desire from love to bee like to him, the more irksome will this be : no wonder then that the Apostle cryed out, *O wretched man that I am, &c.*

Cap. 23.

Rom. 7.

Rom. 7.

Here is a speciall use of Trust, in the free mercy of God in justification, (considering all is stained that comes from us) it is one maine end of Gods leaving us in this conflicting condition, that we may live and die by faith in the perfect righteousness of Christ, whereby we glorifie God more, than if wee had perfect righteousness of our owne. Hereby likewise, wee are driven to make use of all the promises of Grace, and to trust in GOD for the performance of them, in strengthening his owne

That the sight and sense of this tharp conflict, should cause us to trust the more in God.

Cap. 23.

owne party in us, and not onely to trust in God for particular graces, but for his Spirit which is the spring of all graces, which wee have through and from Christ, who will helpe us in this fight, untill hee hath made us like himselfe. Wee are under the government of Grace, sinne is deposed from the rule it had, and shall never recover the right it had againe; *It is left in us for matter of exercise, and ground of triumph.*

Object.

Of perseverance to the end, answered.

Oh (say some) I shall never hold out, as good give over at first as at last, I find such strong inclinations to sinne in me, and such weaknesse to resist temptation, that I feare I shall but shame the cause; I shall one day perish by the hand of Satan strengthening my corruption.

Answ.

Why art thou thus troubled? Trust in God, Grace will bee above Nature, God above the devill, the Spirit above the flesh. Bee strong in the Lord, the battell is his, and the victory ours before hand. If wee fought in our owne cause and strength, and with our weapons, it were something: but as wee fight in the power of God, so are wee

kept

kept by that mighty power through faith unto salvation. It lies upon the faithfulness of Christ, to put us into that possession of glory which he hath purchased for us: therefore charge the soule to make use of the promises and rely upon God for perfecting the good worke that he hath begun in thee.

Cap. 23.
1 Pet. 1. 5.

Corruptions be strong, but stronger is he that is in us, then that corruption that is in us. When wee are weake in our owne sense, then are wee strong in *him*, who perfecteth strength in our weaknesse felt and acknowledged. Our corruptions are Gods enemies as well as ours, and therefore in trusting to *him*, and fighting against them, we may bee sure hee will take our part against them.

But I have great impediments, and many discouragements in my Christian course.

Object.

What if our impediments be *Mountaines*, faith is able to remove them; *Who art thou O Mountaine* (saith the Prophet.) What a world of impediments were there bewixt *Egypt* and the land of *Canaan*, betwixt the returne out of *Babylon*

Ans.

Zach. 4. 7.

Cap. 23.

Psal. 95.

Object.

Answ.

*Babylon and Ierusalem, yet faith removed all, by looking to Gods power and truth in his promise. The looking too much to the *Anakims* and *Gyants*, and too little to Gods omnipotency, shut the Israelites out of *Canaan*, and put God to his oath, that they should *never enter into his rest*: and it will exelude our soules from happineffe at length, if looking too much upon these *Anakims* within us and without us, wee basely despaire and give over the field, considering all our enemies are not onely conquered for us by our *Head*, but shall be conquered in us, so that in strength of assistance we fight against them. God gave the Israelites enemies into their hands, but yet they must fight it out, and what coward will not fight when he is sure of help and victory?*

But I cary continually about mee a corrupt heart, if that were once changed, I could have some comfort.

A new heart is Gods creature, and hee hath promised to create it in us. A creating power cannot only bring something out of nothing, but contrary out of

of contrary. Where we are sure of Gods truth, let us never question that power to which all things are possible. If our hearts were as ill, as God is powerfull and good, there were some ground of discouragement. In what measure we give up our hearts to God, in that measure we are sure to receive them better. That grace which enlargeth the heart to desire good, is therefore given, that God may increase it, being both a part and a pledge of further grace. There is a promise of pouring *cleane water* upon us, which *faith* must sue out. Christ hath taken upon him to purge his *Sponse*, and make her fit for himselfe.

Ephes. 5.

But I have many wants and defects to be supplied.

Object.

It pleaseth him, that in Christ *all fulnesse shall dwell*, from whose fulnesse grace sufficient is dispensed to us, answerable to the measure of our *faith*, whereby we fetch it from the fountain. The more we *trust*, the more we have. When we looke therefore to our owne want, we should look withall to Christs *fulnesse*, and his *neerenesse* to us, and
take

Answer.

Cap. 23.

take advantage from our misery, to rest upon his *al. sufficiency*, whose *fulnesse* is ours, as *himselfe* is. Our fulnesse with our life is hid in Christ, and distilled into us, in such measure as his wisdometh thinketh fit, and as sheweth him to bee a *free agent*, and yet so as the blame for want of grace lieth upon us, seeing hee is before hand with us in his offers of grace, and our owne consciences will tell us, that our failings are more from cherishing of some lust, then from unwillingnesse in him to supply us with grace.

Object.

But God is of pure eyes, and cannot endure such services as I performe.

Answ.

Though God bee of pure eyes, yet hee looks upon us in *him*, who is blamelesse and without spot, who by vertue of his sweet smelling sacrifice, appears for us in heaven, and mingles his odours with our services, and in him will God be knowne to us by the name of a kinde Father, not onely in pardoning our defects, but accepting our endeavours. Wee offer our services to God, not in our owne name, but in the name of our
high

high Priest, who takes them from us, and presents them to his Father, as stirred up by his Spirit, and perfumed by his obedience. *Jonas* his prayer was mingled with a great deale of passion and imperfection, yet God could discern something of his *owne* in it, and pittie and pardon the rest.

Cap. 34.

CAP. XXIV.

Of outward troubles disquieting the spirit: and comforts in them.

AS for the *outward evils* that wee meet withall in this life, they are either *such*, 1. *As deprive us of the comforts our nature is supported withall*; or else, 2. *they bring such misery upon our nature or condition that hinders our well-being in this world.*

1.

2.

For the first, Trust in God, and take out of his al-sufficiency whatsoever we want. Sure wee are by his promise, that wee shall want nothing that is good. What hee takes away one way, hee can give another, what hee takes away in one

1.

For outward evils.

Amaziah.

one

Cap. 24.

one hand, he can give in another, what he with-holds one way, he can supply in a better. Whatsoever comfort wee have in goods, friends, health, or any other blessings, it is all conveyed by *him*; who still remaines though these bee taken from us. And wee have him bound in many promises for all that is needfull for us. We may sue him upon his owne bond; can we thinke that he who will give us a kingdome, will faile us in necessary provision to bring us thither, who himselfe is our portion?

2.
For the
miseries of
this life, of
our nature
and condi-
tion.

As for those miseries which our weak nature is subject to, they are all under Christ, they come and goe at his command, they are his messengers sent for our good, and called back againe when they have done what they came for. Therefore look not so much upon *them*, as *to him* for strength and comfort in them, mitigation of *them*, and grace to profit by them.

To strengthen our faith the more in God, he calleth himselfe, a *Buckler* for defence from ill, and an *exceeding great reward* for a supply of all good. A *sunne* for

for the one, and a *shield* for the other. Trust him then with health, wealth, good name, all that thou hast. It is not in man to take away that from us which God will give us, and keepe for us. It is not in mans power to make others conceive what they please of us.

Cap. 24.

Among crosses, this is that which disquieteth not the minde least, to bee deceived in matter of *trust*, when as if wee had not trusted, wee had not bene deceived. The very feare of being disappointed, made *David* in his haste thinke *all men were liars*. But as it is a sharp crosse, so nothing will drive us nearer unto God, who never faileth his.

Psal. 116.

Friends often prove as the *reed of Egypt*, as a *broken staffe*, and as a *deceitful Brooke*, that failes the weary passenger in Summer time, when there is most need of refreshing; and it is the unhappinesse of men otherwise happy in the world, that during their prosperous condition, they know not who be their friends, for when their condition declines, it plainly appeares, that many were friends of their *estates*, and not of

Iob 6. 13.

Cap. 24.

f

Ioh. 16. 33.
*Solus non est
 cui Christus
 comes est.*

Cypr.
 1 Tim. 1. 7.

Pla. 69. 20.

their persons: But when men will know us least, God will know us most, hee knowes our soules in *adversitie*, and knowes themso, as to support and comfort them, and that from the spring head of comfort, whereby the sweetest comforts are fetcht. What God conveyed before by friends, that hee doth now instill immediately from himselfe. The immediate comforts are the strongest comforts. Our Saviour Christ told his Disciples, that they would *leave him alone*, yet (saith hee) *I am not alone, but the Father is with mee*. At S. Pauls first appealing, *all forsooke him*, but *the Lord stood by him*. Hee wants no company, that hath Christ for his companion. *I looked for some to take pity* (saith David) *but there was none*. This unfaithfulnessse of man, is a foile to set out Gods truth, who is never nearer than when trouble is neereft. There is not so much as a *shadow of change* in him or his love.

It is just with God, when we lay too much weight of confidence upon any creature, to let us have the greater fall; Man may faile us, and yet bee a good man,

man, but God cannot faile us and bee God, because hee is truth it selfe. Shall God be so true to us, and shall not wee be true to him and his truth?

The like may bee said in the departure of our friends. Our life is oft too much in the life of others, which God takes unkindly: How many friends have we in him alone; who rather than wee shall want friends, can make our enemies our friends. A true beleever is to Christ as his *Mother, Brother, and Sister*, because hee carries that affection to them, as if they were *Mother, Brother, and Sister* to him indeed. As Christ makes us all to him, so should we make him all in all to our selves. If all comforts in the world were dead, wee have them still in the living Lord.

Sicknesses are harbingers of death, and in the apprehension of many they bee the greatest troubles, and tame great spirits, that nothing else could tame, herein wee are more so deale with God than with men, which is one comfort sickness yeeldeth above other troubles. It is better to bee troubled

Cap. 24

Comfort in
departure
of friends

Mar. 12. 50

Comfort
in sickness

Cap. 24.

Meanes
not to be
relyed on.

with the distempers of our owne bodies, than with the distempers of other mens soules; In which wee have not onely to deale with men, but with the devill himselfe, that ruleth in the humours of men.

The example of *Asa* teaches us in this case, not to lay too much trust upon the Physitian, but with *Hezekiah* first looke up to God, and then use the meanes. If God will give us a *quietus est*, and take us off from businesse by sicknesse, then wee have a time of serving God by patient subjection to his will. If he meanes to use our service any further, hee will restore our health and strength to doe that worke hee sets us about. Health is at his command, and sicknesse stayes at his rebuke. In the meane, the time of sicknesse is a time of purging from that defilement wee gathered in our health, till wee come purer out; which should move us the rather willingly to abide Gods time. Blessed is that sicknesse that proves the health of the soule. Wee are best, for the most part, when wee are weakest.

Then

*Optimi sunt
infirmi sumus.*

Then it appeares what good proficients we have been in time of health.

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Carnall men are oft led along by false hopes suggested by others, and cherished by themselves, that they shall live still, and doe well, till death comes and cuts off their vaine confidence, and their life both at once, before ever they are acquainted what it is to trust in God aright, in the use of meanes. Wee should labour to learne of *S. Paul* in desperate cases, *to receive the sentence of death*, and not to trust *in our selves*, but in God *that raiseth the dead*. He that raiseth our dead bodies out of the grave, can raise our diseased bodies out of the bed of sicknesse, if he hath a pleasure to serve himselfe by us.

2 Cor. 19.

In all kinde of troubles, it is not the ingredients that God puts into the Cup so much afflicts us, as the ingredients of our distempered passions mingled with them. The sting and coare of them all is *sinne*: when that is not onely pardoned, but in some measure healed, and the proud flesh eaten out, then a healthy soule will beare any

Sin the
greatest
trouble.

Cap. 24.

thing. After repentance, that trouble that before was a correction, becomes now a triall and exercise of grace. *Strike Lord* (saith *Luther*) *I beare any thing willingly, because my sinnes are forgiven.* We should not bee cast downe so much about outward troubles, as about sinne, that both procures them, and inuolues them. Wee see by experience, when conscience is once set at liberty, how chearefully men will goe under any burthen: therefore labour to keepe out sinne, and then let come what will come.

Avoid not
trouble by
sinne.

It is the foolish wisdom of the world to prevent trouble by sin, which is the way indeed to pull the greatest trouble upon us. For sinne dividing betwixt God and us, moveth him to leave the soule to intangle it selfe in its owne wayes. When the conscience is cleare, then there is nothing betweene God and us to hinder our trust. Outward troubles rather drive us neerer unto God, and stand with his love. But sin defileth the soule, and sets it further from God. *It is well doing* that inables

1 Pet. 4. 3.
21.

us

us to commit our soules cheerefully unto him. Whatsoever our outward condition bee, if *our hearts condemne us not*, we may have *boldnesse with God*. In any trouble our care should bee, not to avoid the trouble, but *sinfull miscariage in and about the trouble*; and so *trust God*. It is a heavy condition to bee under the burthen of trouble, and under the burthen of a guilty conscience both at once. When men will *walke in the light of their owne fire*, and the sparks which they have kindled themselves, it is just with God, that *they should lie downe in sorrow*.

1 Ioh. 1.

1 Iay 50. ult.

Whatsoever injuries we suffer from those that are ill affected to us, let us commit our cause to the *God of vengeance*, and not meddle with his prerogative. He will revenge our cause better than wee can, and more perhaps than wee desire. The wronged side, is the safer side, * If instead of meditating revenge, we can so overcome our selves as to pray for our enemies, and deserve well of them, wee shall both sweeten our owne spirits, and prevent a sharpe

* Melior est tristitia, iniqua patientia, quam letitia, iniqua facies. Aug.

Cap. 24.

Luk. 23. 34

Comfort in
the hours
of death.

temptation which wee are prone unto, and have an undoubted argument, that wee are sonnes of that Father that doth good to his *enemies*, and members of that Saviour that prayed for his *persecutors*. And withall by *heaping coales* upon our enemies, shall melt them either to conversion, or to confusion.

But the greatest tryall of *trust*, is in our last encounter with death, wherein we shall finde not onely a deprivation of all *comforts* in this life, but a confluence of all *ill* at once, but wee must know, God will be the God of *his* unto death, and not onely unto death, but in death. We may trust God the Father with our bodies and soules which he hath created; and God the Sonne, with the bodies and soules which hee hath redeemed; and the holy Spirit, with those bodies and soules that hee hath sanctified. Wee are not disquieted when wee put off our cloathes and goe to bed, because we trust Gods ordinary providence to raise us up againe. And why should we be disquieted when we put off our bodies, and sleep our last sleep, considering

dering we are more sure to rise out of our graves, than out of our beds. Nay wee are raised up already in Christ our head, *who is the resurrection and the life*, in whom wee may triumph over death, that triumpheth over the greatest Monarchs, as a disarmed and conquered enemy. Death is the death of it selfe, and not of us. If we would have faith ready to die by, wee must exercise it well in living by it, and then it will no more faile us, than the good things wee lay hold on by it, untill it hath brought us into heaven, where that office of it is laid aside: here is the prerogative of a true Christian above an hypocrite and a worldling, when as their trust, and the thing they trust in, failes them, then a true beleevers trust stands him in greatest stead.

In regard of our *state after death*, a Christian need not be disquieted, for the *Angels* are ready to doe their office in carrying his soule to *Paradise*, those *Mansions prepared for him*. His Saviour will bee his Judge, and the Head will not condemne the members: *then hee*

Cap. 24.

Ioh. 11. 25.

Com'g
from the
state after
death.

Iohn 14. 2.

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is to receive the fruit and end of his Faith, the reward of his Hope; which is so great and so sure, that our trusting in *God* for that, strengthneth the heart to trust him for all other things in our passage; so that the refreshing of our faith in these great things, refreshes its dependance upon *God* for all things here below. And how strong helps have wee to uphold our Faith, in those great things which wee are not able to conceive of, till wee come to possesse them? Is not our husband there? and hath hee not taken possession for us? doth hee not keepe our place for us? Is not our flesh there in him? and his Spirit below with us? have wee not some first fruits and earnest of it beforehand? Is not *Christ* now a fitting and preparing of us daily, for what he hath prepared and keepes for us? Whither tends all wee meet with in this world, that comes betwixt us and heaven, as desertions, inward conflicts, outward troubles, and death at last, but to fit us for a better condition hereafter, and by Faith therein, to stirre up a strong
desire

desire after it? *Comfort one another with these things, saith the Apostle; these be the things will comfort the soule.*

Cap. 25.
1 Thes. 4.

C A P. XX V.

Of the defects of gifts disquieting the soule. As also the afflictions of the Church.

AMong other things, there is nothing more disquiets a Christian, that is called to the fellowship of Christ and his Church here, and to glory hereafter, than that he sees himselfe unfurnished with those gifts that are fit for the calling of a Saint; As likewise for that particular standing and place wherein God hath set him in this world, by being a member of a body politick.

For our *Christian calling*, wee must know that Christianity is a matter rather of grace than of gifts, of obedience than of parts. *Gifts* may come from a more common worke of the Spirit, they are common to castawayes, and

Comfort
in regard
of our ge-
nerall cal-
ling.

Cap. 25.

Exod. 7. 11

and are more for others than for our selves. *Grace* comes from a peculiar favour of God, and especially for our owne good. In the same duty, where there is required both gifts and grace, (as in *prayer*) one may performe it with evidence of greater grace, than another of greater parts. *Moses* (a man not of the best speech) was chosen before *Aaron*, to speake to God, and to strive with him by Prayer, whilst *Israel* fought with *Amalek* with the sword. It is a businesse more of the heart than of the tongue, more of groanes than of words, which groanes and sighes, the Spirit will alwaies stirre up even in the worst condition. Yet for parts there is no member, but it is fitted with some abilities, to doe service in the body, and by faith may grow up to a greater measure. For God calls none to that high condition, but whom in some measure hee fits to be an usefull member, and endues with a publike spirit.

But that is the measure which Christ thinkes fit; who will make up that in the

the body, which is wanting in any particular member. God will encrease the measure of our gifts, as occasion shall bee offered to draw them forth: for there is not the greatest, but may have use both of the parts, and graces of the meanest in the Church. And here the soule may by a spirit of faith goe to God in this manner: Lord, the estate of Christianity unto which thy love in Christ hath called, and advanced mee, is an high condition; and there is need of a great measure of grace, to uphold the credit and comfort of it. Whom thou callest unto it, thou dost in some measure furnish, to walke worthy of it. Let this bee an evidence to my soule of the truth of thy call, that I am enabled by the Spirit for those duties that are required; in confidence of which assistance, I will set upon the work: *Thou hast promised to give wisdom to them that aske it, and to upbraid none with their unworthinesse. Nay, thou hast promised the spirit of all grace to those that beg it; it is that which I need, and it is no more than thou hast promised.*

1 Tim. 1. 5.

Onely

Cap. 23.
Caution

Directions
for a com-
fortable
use of our
particular
calling.
Gal. 5. 13.

*Pares ne-
gocio.*

Onely it must bee remembred, that wee doe not walke above our parts and graces, the issue whereof will be discouragement in our selves, and disgrace from others.

The like may be said for our *particular* calling, wherein we are to expresse the graces of our Christian calling, and *serve one another in love*, as members of the *State* as well as of the *Church*: therefore every one must have 1. a calling, 2. a lawfull, 3. a usefull calling, 4. a calling fitted for his parts, that he may be even for his businesse, 5. a lawfull entrance, and calling thereunto, 6. and a lawfull demeanour in the same. Though the Orbe and Sphere we walk in be little, yet wee must keepe within the bounds of it, because for our carriage in that, wee must give a strict account, and there is no calling so meane, but a man shall finde enough to give a good account for. Our care must be to know our worke, and then to doe it, and so to doe it, as if it were unto God, with conscience of moderate diligence; for over-doing, and over-working any thing,

thing, comes either from ostentation, or distrust in God: And negligence is so farre from getting any blessing, that it brings us under a *curse* for *doing Gods worke negligently*. For wee must thinke our callings to be services of God, who hath appointed us our standing therein.

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Ier. 48. 30.

That which belongs to us in our calling, is care of discharging our duty, that which God takes upon him, is assistance and good successe in it. Let us doe our worke, and leave God to doe his owne. Diligence and trust in him is onely ours, the rest of the burthen is his. In a family the Fathers and the Masters care is the greatest, the childs care is onely to obey, and the servants to doe his worke, care of provision and protection doth not trouble them. Most of our disquietnesse in our calling, is that wee trouble our selves about Gods worke. Trust God and be doing, and let him alone with the rest. Hee stands upon his credit so much, that it shall appeare wee have not trusted him in vaine, even when wee see no appearance

rance

Cap. 25.

Luke 5. 6.

Mat. 6. 33.

Exo. 4. 11.

Object.

Answ.

rance of doing any good. Peter fished all night and caught nothing, yet upon Christs word hee casts in his net againe, and caught so many fish as *brake his net*. Covetousnesse (when men will bee richer than God would have them) troubles all, *it troubles the house*, the whole family, and the house within us, our precious soule, which should bee a quiet house for Gods *Spirit to dwell in*, whose seat is a quiet spirit. If men would follow Christs method, and *seeke first the Kingdome of heaven*, all other things would bee cast upon them. If thoughts of insufficiency in our places discourage us, remember what God saith to *Moses*, when hee pretended disability to speake, *Who hath made mans mouth, have not I the Lord?* All our sufficiency for every calling is from God.

But you will say, *Though by Gods blessing my particular condition bee comfortable, yet the state of Gods people abroad, and the miseries of the times disquiet me.*

Wee complaine of the times, but let us take heed wee bee not a part of the misery

misery of the times: that they bee not the worse for us. Indeed hee is a dead member, that takes not to heart the ill of the times, yet here is place for that complaint, *Help Lord.* In these tempests doe as the Disciples did, Cry to CHRIST to rebuke the tempests and stormes. This is the day of *Jacobs* trouble, let it also be the day of *Jacobs* trust; let the body doe as the head did in the like case, and in time it shall be with the body as it is with the head.

In this case it is good to lay before GOD all the promises made to his Church, with the examples of his presence in it, and deliverance of the same in former times. God is never neerer his Church than when trouble is neere: when in earth they conclude an utter overthrow, God is in heaven concluding a glorious deliverance: usually after the lowest ebbe, follows the highest spring-tide. CHRIST stands upon *Mount Zion.* There is a Counsell in heaven, that will dash the mould of all contrary Counsels on earth; and which is more, GOD will worke the

Cap. 25.

Hab. 3.

Ps. 12.

Comfort
in regard
of the af-
flictions
of the
Chu. ch.

E e

raising

Cap. 25.

raising of the Church, by that very meanes by which his enemies seeke to ruine it. *Let us stand still and behold the salvation of the Lord.* God gave too dearea price for his Church, to suffer it long in the hands of merelleffe enemies.

As for the seeming flourishing of the enemies of Gods Church, it is but for a time, and that a short time, and a measured time, *The wicked plot against the just*, they are plotters and plowers of mischief; they are skilfull and industrious in it, but they reape their owne ruine. *Their day is a coming*, and *their pit is in digging*: take heed therefore of fretting, because of the man *that bringeth wicked devices to passe*; for *the armes of the wicked shall be broken*. Wee should help our faith by observing Gods executing of judgement in this kinde. It cannot but vexe the enemies of the Church, to see at length a disappointing of their projects, but then to see the mould of all their devices turned upon their owne heads, will more torment them.

Psa. 37. 12.

Iob 4. 8.

Psa. 37. 12.

Psa. 94. 13.

Psal. 37. 7.

Psa. 37. 17.

Reade

Psalmes

10. 37. 94.

32. 9. &c.

In this case, it will much comfort to goe into the Sanctuary, for there wee shall be able to say, *Yet God is good to Israel.* God hath an Arke for his, there is no condition so ill, but there is Balme in Gilead, comfort in Israel. *The depths of misery are never beyond the depths of mercy.* God oft for this very end, strips his Church of all helps below, that it may onely rely upon him: and that it may appeare that the Church is ruled by an higher power than it is opposed by. *And then is the time when wee may expect great deliverances of the Church, when there is a great faith in the great God.*

From all that hath been said, we see, that the onely way to quiet the soule is, to lay a charge upon it to trust God, and that unquietnesse and impatiency, are symptomes and discoveries of an unbelieving heart.

CAP. XXVI.

Of divine reasons in a beleever. Of his minding to praise God, more than to be delivered.

TO goe on. [*I shall yet praise him.*]

In these words *David* expresseth the reasons and grounds of his trust, namely from the interest hee had in God by experience and speciall covenant: wherein in generall wee may observe, that those who truly trust in God, labour to back their faith with sound arguments; Faith is an understanding grace, it knowes *whom* it trusts, and *for what*, and upon what grounds it trusts: Reason of it selfe cannot finde what wee should beleeve, yet when God hath discovered the same, *faith* tels us there is great reason to beleeve it; *faith* useth reason (though not as a ground, yet) as a sanctified instrument to finde out Gods grounds, that it may rely upon them. Hee beleeves best, that knowes best why hee should beleeve; Confidence, and love, and other affections of the

Back faith
with
strong
reason.

the soule, though they have no reason grafted in them, yet thus farre they are reasonable, as that they are in a wise man raised up, guided, and laid downe with reason, or else men were neither to bee blamed nor praised for ordering their affections aright; whereas not only civill vertue, but *grace* it selfe is especially conversant in ruling the affections by sanctified reason.

The soule guides the *will* and *affections*, otherwile then it doth the outward members of the body. It swayes the affections of *confidence*, *love*, *joy*, &c. as a Prince doth his wiser subjects, and as Counsellors doe a well ordered State by ministring *reasons* to them; but the soule governes the outward members by *command*, as a master doth a slave, * his will is enough: The hand and foot move upon command, without regarding any reason; but we will not *trust* and rejoyce in God without *reason*, or a shew of reason at the least.

Sinne it selfe never wanted a reason, such as it is, but we call it *unreasonable*, because it hath no good reason for it;

* *Stat pro
ratione vo-
luntas.*

Sin hath
its reason.

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for *reason* being a beame of God, cannot strengthen any worke of darknesse. God having made man an understanding creature, guides him by a way suitable to such a condition, and that is the reason why God in mercy yeelds so far to us in his word, as to give us so many reasons of our affiance in him. What is encouragement and comfort, but a demonstration to us of greater reasons to raise us up, than there are to cast us downe.

Dauids reasons (here) are drawne partly from some *promise* of deliverance, and partly from Gods *nature* and *dealing* with him, *whom*, as hee had formerly found an *healing* and a *saving* God, so he expects to finde him still; and partly from the *covenant of grace*; he is *my God*.

The chiefe of his reasons are fetched from God; what hee is in *himselfe*, and what hee is and will bee to *his children*, and what to him in particular; though godly men have *reasons* for their *trust*, yet those reasons be *divine* and spirituall as *faith* it selfe is; for as naturally as beames

beames come from the Sunne, and branches from the *roote*, even so by divine discourse one truth issueth from another. And as the beames and the Sunne, as the roote and branches are all of one nature, so the grounds of comfortable truths, and *reasons* taken from those grounds, are both of the same divinity and authority, though in time of *temptation* discourse is oft so troubled, that it cannot see how one truth riseth from another; this is one priviledge of *heaven*, that our knowledge there shall not be so much *discursive*, proving one thing by another, as *definitive*, seeing things in their *grounds* with a more present view: the soule being then raised and enlarged to a present conceiving of things, and there being no flesh and bloud in us, to raise objections that must be satisfied with *reasoning*.

Sometimes in a clearer state of the soule, *faith* hath not so much use of reasons; but upon neere and sweet communion with God, and by reason of some likenesse betweene the soule that hath a divine nature stamped upon it,

A godly mans reasons are divine.

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and God, it presently without any long discourse, runneth to God as it were by a supernaturall instinct, as by a naturall instinct a childe runneth to his Father in any distresse. Yea, and from that common light of nature, which discovereth there is a God, even naturall men in extremities will runne to God, and God as the Author of nature will sometimes heare them, as he doth the yong *Ravens* that cry unto him; but comfortably, and with assurance onely those have a familiar recourse unto him, that have a sanctified sutable disposition unto God, as being well acquainted with him.

Sometimes againe *faith* is put to it to use reasons to strengthen it selfe, and therefore the soule studieth arguments to helpe it selfe by, either from inward store laid up in the soule, or else it hearkeneth, and yeelds to reasons suggested by others; and there is no gracious heart, but hath a frame sutable and agreeable to any holy and comfortable truth that shall bee brought and enforced upon it; there is something in his spirit

spirit that answers what ever comes from the Spirit of God: though perhaps it never heard of it before, yet it presently claimes kindred of it, as coming from the same blessed Spring, the *holy Spirit*; and therefore a gracious heart sooner takes comfort than another, as being prepared to close with it.

The *Reasons* here brought by *David*, are not so much arguments to convince his *judgement*, as motives and inducements to encline his *will* to trust in God: for *trusting* being a holy relying upon God, carrieth especially the *will* to him; now the *will* is led with the goodnesse of things, as the *understanding* is led with truth; the heart must bee sweetned with consideration of love and mercy in him whom we trust, as well as convinced of his ability to doe us good; the cords that draw the heart to trust, are the *cords of love*, and the cords of love are especially the love of him to us whom we love; and therefore the most prevailing reasons that cary the whole heart, are such as are drawne from the sweetnesse of God,

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God, whereby the heart is opened and enlarged to expect all good, and nothing but good from him.

But we must remember, that neither *reasons* from the truth and power of God, nor *inducements* or allurements from the goodnesse of God, will further prevaile with the soule, than it hath a fresh light and relish brought into it by the Spirit of God, to discern of those reasons, and answer the contrary.

[*I will praise him.*] David here minds praising of God more than his owne *delivery*, because he knew his owne delivery was intended on Gods part, that he might be *glorified*. It is an argument of an excellent spirit, when all self-respects are drowned in the glory of God; and there is nothing lost therein; for our best being is in God. A Christian begins with loving God for himselfe; but he ends in loving himselfe in and for God: and so his end, and Gods end, and the end of all things else, concenter and agree in one. Wee may ayme at our owne good, so wee bring our hearts

hearts to referre it to the *chiefe good*, as a lesse circle may well bee contained in a greater, so that the *lines* drawne from both *circles*, meet in one middle point. It is an excellent ground of sincerity, to desire the favour of God, not so much out of selfe-aimes, as that God may have the more free and full *praise* from us, considering the soule is never more fit for that blessed duty, then when it is in a cheerefull plight.

It rejoyced *David* more, that hee should have a large heart to serve God, than that hee should have enlargement of condition. Holy dispositions thinke not so much of the time to come, that it will bee sweet to them, as that it will further Gods praise. True grace raiseth the soule above selfe-respects, and resteth not till it comes to the chiefe end, wherein its happinesse consists.

God is glorified in making us happy, and wee (enjoying happinesse) must glorifie God. Although God condescend so low unto us, as not onely to allow us, but to enjoyne us to looke to
our

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our owne freedome from misery, and enjoyment of happinesse, yet a soule throughly seasoned with *grace*, mounteth higher, and is caried with pure respects to advance Gods glory; yea sometimes so farre, as to forget its owne happinesse, it respects it selfe for God, rather than God for it selfe. A heavenly soule is never satisfied, untill it bee as neere God as is attaineable. And the neerer a creature comes to God, the more it is emptied of it selfe, and all selfe-aines. Our happinesse is more in *him*, than in our selves. *Wee seeke our selves most, when we deny our selves most.* And the more wee labour to advance God, the more we advance our owne condition in him.

[*I will praise.*] David thinkes of his owne *duty* in praising God, more than of *Gods worke* in delivering him: Let us thinke of what is our duty, and God will thinke of what shall bee for our comfort; we shall feele God answering what we looke for from him, in doing what hee expects from us. Can wee have so meane thoughts of him, as that

that we should intend his glory, and he not much more intend our good?

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This should be a strong Plea unto us in our prayers, to prevaile with God, when wee ingage our selves upon the revelation of his mercy to us, to yeeld him all the praises. Lord as the benefit and comfort shall bee mine, so the praises shall be thine.

It is little lesse then blasphemy, to praise God for that which by unlawfull shifts wee have procured; for besides the *hypocrisie* of it (in seeming to sacrifice to him, when wee sacrifice indeed to our owne wits and carnall helps) wee make him a Patron of those wayes which he most abhors; and it is *Idolatry* in the highest degree, to transforme God so in our thoughts, as to thinke hee is pleased with that which comes from his greatest enemy. And there is a grosse mistake to take Gods curse for a blessing; To thrive in an ill way, is a spirituall judgement, extreamly hardening the heart.

We ought not to praise God in doing evill.

It is an argument of *Dauids* sincerity here, that hee meant not to take any indirect

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2 Tim. 4.
18.1 Sam. 27.
10.

indirect course for delivering himselfe, because hee intended to *praise God*, which as no guilty conscience can offer, (being afraid to look God in the face,) so God would abhorre such a sacrifice, were it offered to him. *S. Paul* was stirred up to *praise God*, but withall he was assured *God would preserve him from every evill worke*.

Sometimes indeed where there is no malicious intention, GOD pardons some breakings out of flesh and blood, endeavouring to helpe our selves in danger, so farre as not to take advantage of them to desert us in trouble, as in *David*, who escaped from *Achis* by *counterfeiting*; and this yeelds a double ground of thankfulness, partly for Gods over-looking our miscarriage, and partly for the deliverance it selfe. Yet this indulgence of God, will make the soule more ashamed afterward, for these sinfull shifts, therefore it must be no president to us. There can neither be grace nor wisdom in setting upon a course, wherein wee can neither pray to God for successe in, nor blesse God when

when he gives it. In this case God most bleſſeth, where hee moſt croſſeth, and moſt curſeth where the deluded heart thinks he bleſſeth moſt.

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GAP. XXVII.

In our worſt condition we have cauſe to praiſe God. Still ample cauſe in theſe dayes.

[*Shall yet praiſe him.*] Or, yet I will praiſe God: that is, however it goeth with mee, yet as I have cauſe, ſo I have a ſpirit to praiſe God; when wee are at the loweſt, yet it is a mercy that we are *not conſumed*; we are never ſo ill, but it might be worſe with us; whatſoever is leſſe than hell is undeſerved. It is a matter of praiſe, that yet we have time and opportunity to get into a bleſſed condition. *The Lord hath afflicted me fore, but he hath not delivered me to death, ſaith David.*

Pla. 118. 18.

In the worſt times there is a preſence of God with his children.

1. In moderating the meaſure of the

1.

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the crosse, that it bee not above their strength.

2.
Psal. 125.3

2. In moderating the time of it, *The rod of the wicked shall not rest long upon the lot of the righteous.* God limits both measure and time.

3.

3. Hee is present in mixing some comfort, and so allaying the bitterneffe of a crosse.

4.

4. Yea, and he supports the soule by inward strength; so as though it faint, yet it shall not utterly faile.

5.

5. God is present in sanctifying a crosse for good, and at length when he hath perfected his owne worke in his, he is present for a finall deliverance of them. A sound hearted Chistian hath alwayes a God to goe to, a promise to goe to, former experience to goe to, besides some present experience of Gods goodnesse which he enjoyes: for the present he is a child of God, a member of Christ, an heire of heaven; hee dwels in the love of God in the crosse, as well as out of it, he may be cast out of his happy condition in the world, but never out of Gods favour.

If

If Gods children have cause to praise God in their worst condition, what difference is there betwixt their best estate and their worst?

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Object.

Howsoever Gods children have continuall occasion to praise God, yet there be some more especiall seasons of praising God than others, there bee dayes of Gods own making, of purpose to rejoyce in, wherein wee may say, *This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoyce therein.* And this I thinke is chiefly intended here. David comforts himselfe with this, that however it was now with him, yet God would deale so graciously with him hereafter, that hee should have cause to blesse his name.

Ans^r:

Ps. 118. 24

Though in evill times we have cause to praise God, yet so wee are, and such are our spirits (for the most part) that affliction straitens our hearts. Therefore the Apostle thought it the fittest duty in affliction to pray, *Is any afflicted let him pray, saith Iames; Is any joyfull, let him sing Psalmes,* shewing that the day of rejoycing is the fittest day of praising God. Every worke of a Christian

Iam. 5. 13.

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Psal. 51. 15

Praise is
most com-
ly in pro-
sperity.

is beautifull in its owne time, the graces of Christianity have their severall offices at severall seasons; in trouble, prayer is in its season, in the evill day *call upon mee*, saith God: In better times *praises* should appeare and shew themselves. When God manifests his goodnesse to *his*, hee gives them grace with it, to manifest their thankfulnessse to him. Praising of God is then most comely (though never out of season) when God seemes to call for it, by renewing the sense of his mercies in some fresh favour towards us. If a bird will sing in Winter, much more in the Spring. If the heart be prepared in the Winter time of adversity to praise God, how ready will it bee when it is warmed with the glorious Sunshine of his favour?

Our life is nothing, but as it were a *webbe* woven with interminglings of wants and favours, *crosses* and *blesings*, standings and failings, *combate* and *victory*, therefore there should bee a perpetuall intercourse of *praying* and *praising* in our hearts. There is alwayes a ground

ground of communion with God in one of these kindes, till wee come to that condition wherein all wants shall be supplied, where indeed is only matter of *praise*. Yet praising God in this life, hath this prerogative, that here we praise him *in the midst of his enemies*. In heaven all will be in consort with us. God esteemes it an *honour* in the midst of devils, and wicked men (whose life is nothing but a dishonour of him) to have those that will make his *name* (as it is in it selfe, so) *great* in the *world*.

David comforts himselfe in this, that he *should praise God*; which shewes hee had inured himselfe well before to this holy exercise, in which he found such comfort, that he could not but *joy* in the fore-thoughts of that time, wherein he should have fresh occasion of his former acquaintance with God. Thoughts of this nature enter not into a heart that is strange to God.

It is a speciall Art in time of misery; to thinke of matter of *joy*, if not for the present, yet for the time *so come*; for

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Christians
have con-
tinuall
ground of
communion
with God.

Thoughts
of praise
should be
precious
to us.

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joy disposeth to *praise*, and *praise* againe stirres up *joy*; these mutually breed one another, even as the seed brings forth the tree, and the tree brings forth the seed. It is wisdom therefore to set *faith* on worke, to take as much comfort as wee can from *future* promises, that wee may have comfort and strength for the *present*, before we have the full possession of them. It is the nature of *faith* to antedate blessings, by making them that are to bee performed *hereafter*, as present *now*, because wee have them in the *promise*. If God had not allowed us to take many things in trust for the time *to come*, both for his glory, and our good, hee would never have left such rich promises to us. For *faith* doth not onely give glory to God for the *present* (in a present beleeving of his truth, and relying upon him) but as it lookes forward, it sees an *everlasting* ground of praising God, and is stirred up to praise him *now*, for that *future* matter of *praise*, which it is sure to have hereafter. The very hopes of future good, made *David* praise God
for

for the present. If the happy condition wee looke for were present, wee would embrace it with present praises. Now *faith is the evidence of things not seene*, and gives a being to *that*, which is not; whereupon a true beleeving soule, cannot but bee a praising soule. For this end God reveales before hand what wee shall have, that before hand we should praise him, as if we possessed it. For that is a great honour to his truth, when wee esteeme of what hee speakes, as done, and what hee promisseth, as already performed. Had wee not a perpetuall confidence in the perpetuity of his love to us, how is it possible we should praise him?

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Heb. 11. 1.

But we want those grounds for the time to come which David had, he had particular promises which we want.

Object.

Though wee want *Vrim* and *Thummim*, and the Prophets to foretell us what the times to come shall be, yet we have the Canon of Scripture enlarged, we live under a more glorious manifestation of Christ, and under a more plentifull shedding of the Spirit, where-

Answe.
I.

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Deut. 31.6

Heb. 12.

11.

Pla. 84.11.

by that want is abundantly supplied; we have generall promises for the time to come, that *God will never faile nor forsake us*; that *he will be with us in fire and in water*, that *he will give an issue to the temptation*, and that *the issue of all things shall be for our good*, that *we shall reap the quiet fruit of righteousness*, and *no good thing will be withhold from them that tend a godly life, &c.* If wee had a spirit of faith to apply these generalls, we should see much of Gods goodnesse in particular.

2.

Besides generall promises, we have some particular ones for the time to come; of the confusion of *Antichrist*, of the conversion of the *Jewes*, and fullnesse of the *Gentiles*, &c. which though we perhaps shall never live to see, yet we are members of that body, which hereafter shall see the same, which should stir up our hearts to praise God, as if we did enjoy the present fulfilling of them our selves, for *faith* can present them to the soule, as if they were now present.

3.

Some that have a more neere communion

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Fred. Myco.

munion with God, may have a particular faith of some particular deliverances, whereupon they may ground particular prayer. " *Luther* praying for a " sick friend, who was very comfortable, and usefull to him, had a particular answer for his recovery, whereupon hee was so confident, that hee sent word to his friend, that hee should certainly recover. *Latimer* prayed with great zeale for three things, " 1. That *Queen Elizabeth* might come " to the Crowne. 2. That hee might " seale the truth with his heart blood. " 3. And that the Gospel might be restored *once againe, once againe*, which hee expressed with great vehemency of spirit. All which three GOD heard him in. But the priviledges of a few must not bee made a generall rule for all. Priviledges goe not out of the persons, but rest there. Yet if men would maintaine a neerer communion with God, there is no doubt but hee would reveale himselfe in more familiar manner to them, in many particulars then usually he doth. Those particular

1.

2.

3.

F f 4

promises

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promises in the 91. Psalm, and other places, are made good to such as have a particular faith, and to all others (with those limitations annexed to promises of that nature) so far forth as God seeth it will induce to their good and his owne glory, and so farre forth as they depend upon him in the use of meanes; And is not this sufficient to stay a gracious heart?

Ps 31. 19.

But not to insit upon particular promises and revelations, (the performance whereof we enjoy *here* in this present life) we have rich and precious promises of finall and full deliverance from all evill, and perfect enjoying of all good in that life which is to come; yet not *so to come*, but that we have the earnest and first fruits of it here; All is not kept for heaven; Wee may say with *David*, *Oh how great is thy goodnesse, which thou hast laid up for them that feare thee*, and (not onely so, but) how great is that goodnesse which thou hast wrought in them that *trust* in thee, even *before the sons of men*; God treasures not up all his goodnesse for the time to come,

come, but layes much of it out daily *before* such as have eyes to behold it.

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Now Gods maine end in revealing such glorious promises of the life to come, is, that they might bee a ground of comfort to us, and of praise to him even in this life ; And indeed what can be grievous in this world to him that hath heaven in his eye ? What made our blessed Saviour *endure the crosse*, and *despise shame*, but the joy of *glory to come set before him* ?

Heb. 12. 2.

The duty that *David* brought his heart to before hee had a full enjoyment of what hee looked for, was patient *waiting*, it being Gods use to put a long date oftentimes to the performance of his promises ; *David* after he had the promise of a Kingdome, was put off a long time ere he was invested to it ; *Abraham* was an old man before hee enjoyed his sonne of the *Promise* ; *Ioseph* stayed a long time before he was exalted ; Our blessed Saviour himselfe was thirty foure yeares old before hee was exalted up into glory.

Waiting
upon God
a necessary
duty.

God *deferres*, but his deferring is no empty

Cap. 27.

empty space, wherein no good is done, but there is in that space a fitting for promises. Whilest the seed lieth hid in the earth, time is not lost, for Winter fits for Spring, yea the harder the Winter, the more hopefull the Spring; yet were it a meere empty space, wee should hold out, because of the great things to come; but being onely a preparing time, we should passe it with the lesse discouragement. Let this support us in all the thwartings of our desire; it is a folly to thinke; that wee should have Physicke and health both at once; wee must endure the working of Gods Physick; when the sick humour is carried away and purged, then wee shall enjoy desired health. God promiseth forgiveness of sinne, but thou findest the burthen of it daily on thee. Cheere up thy selfe, when the morning is darkest, then comes day; after a weary weeke comes a Sabbath, and after a fight victory will appeare. Gods time is best, therefore resolve upon waiting his leisure. For the better demeaning of our selves herein, we must know we must

must so *waite*, that we provoke not in the meane time his patience on whom we depend, by putting forth our hand to any evill, which indeed is a crossing of our hopes. Therefore waiting upon God, is alwayes joyned with *doing good*. There is an influence in the thing hoped for, in the spirit of him that truly hopes, stirring him up to a sutable conformity, by purging himself of whatsoever will not stand with the holinesse of that condition. *Waiting* implyes all graces, as *Patience, Perseverance, Long-suffering* in holding out, notwithstanding the tediousnesse of time deferred; *Courage*, and breaking through all difficulties that stand betweene. For what is *waiting* indeed, but a continuing in a gracious inoffensive course, till the accomplishment of our desires?

What it is
to wait upon
God.

Whence wee may discern a maine difference betwixt a Christian, and a carnall man, who is short-spirited, and all for the present; hee will have his good here, whereas a Saint of God continues still waiting, though all things seeme contrary to what he expects.

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Heb. 11.
25.

pects. The presence of things to come is such to *faith*, as it makes it *despise the pleasure of sinne for a season*. What evidence of goodnesse is it, for a man to be good onely upon the apprehension of something that contents him? Here is the glory of *faith*, that it can upon Gods bare promise, crosse it selfe in things pleasing to nature, and raise up the soule to a disposition, some wayes answerable to that blessed estate, which (though yet it enjoyes not, yet) it is undoubtedly perswaded of, and looks for. What can incourage us more to *waite*, than this, that the good we wait for, is greater than wee are able to conceive, yea greater than we can desire or hope for?

This was no presumptuous resolution of *Dauids* owne strength, but it issued from his present truth of heart, (so farre as he knew the same;) together with an humble dependance upon God, both for deliverance, and a heart to praise him for it; because Gods benefits are usually entire, and are sweetened with such a sense of his love, as causeth

causeth a *thankfull heart*, which (to a true Christian) is a greater blessing then the deliverance it selfe, as making the soule better. *David* doth acknowledge with humble admiration, that a heart enlarged comes from God, *Who am I* (saith he) *and who are my people?*

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Hee mentioneth here *praising God*, in stead of *deliverance*, because a heart enlarged to praise God, is indeed the greatest part of the *deliverance*; for by it the soule is delivered out of its owne straits and discontent.

CAP. XXVIII.

Divers qualities of the praise due to God. With helps therein. And notes of Gods hearing our prayers.

THough this be Gods *due* and our *duety*, and in it selfe a delightfull thing, yet it is not so easie a matter to *praise God*, as many imagine: Musick is sweet, but the setting of the strings in tune is unpleasing; our soules will not be long in tune, and it is harsh to us to goe about the

No easie matter to praise God aright.

Cap. 18.

the setting them in order ; like curious Clocks, a little thing will hinder the motion ; especially *passion*, which disturbs not onely the frame of grace in us, but the very frame of *nature*, putting man out of the power and possession of himselfe ; and therefore *David* here when he had thoughts of *praising God*, was faine to take up the quarrell betwixt him and his soule first ; *Praising* sets all the parts and graces of the soule aworke ; and therefore the soule had need gather it selfe and its strength together to this *duty*.

Self-denial
a requisite
in praising
God.

It requires especially *selfe-deniall*, from a conscience of our owne wants, weaknesse, and unworthinesse ; it requires a giving up of our selves, and all ours to be at Gods dispose ; the very *ground* and the *fruit* which it yeelds are both Gods ; and they never gave themselves truly up to God, that are not ready to give all they have to him whensoever he calls for it ; *thankfulnesse* is a *sacrifice*, and in sacrifices there must be *killing* before *offering*, otherwise the sacrifice will be as the offering up of
some

The Soules Conflict.

441

Cap. 28.

some uncleane creature; *thanksgiving* is an *Incense*, and there must bee *fire* to burne that *Incense*; *thanksgiving* requires not onely *affections*, but the *heat* of *affections*; there must be some assurance of the benefit wee praise GOD for; and it is no easie matter to maintaine assurance of our interest in the best things.

Yet in this case if we feele not sense of assurance, it is good we should praise God for what we have; we cannot deny but God offers himselfe in mercy to us, and that hee intends our good thereby, for so wee ought to construe his mercifull dealing towards us, and not have him in jealousy without ground; if we bring our hearts to bee willing to praise God, for that wee cannot but acknowledge comes from him, hee will be ready in his time to shew himselfe more clearly to us; we taste of his goodnesse many wayes, and it is accompanied with much patience, and these in their natures leade us not onely to *repentance*, but likewise to *thankfull* acknowledgement; and wee ought to follow that
which

What a
Christian
should doe
in want of
assurance.

Rom. 2.4.

Cap. 18.

Resolutiō
necessary
in Christi-
anity.

which God leades us unto, though hee hath not yet acquainted us with his secrets.

It is good in this case to helpe the soule with a firm *resolution*; and to back resolution with a *vow*, not onely in generall that wee will *praise*, but particularly of something within our owne power, (provided it prove no snare to us.) For by this meanes the heart is perfectly gained, and the thing is as good as done in regard of Gods acceptance; and our comfort; because strong resolutions discover *sincerity* without any hypocriticall reservation and hollowness. Alwayes so much sincerity as a man hath, so much will his inward peace be. *Resolution* as a strong streame beares downe all before it; little good is done in Religion without *this*, and with it all is as good as done.

So soone as we set upon this worke, wee shall feele our spirits to rise higher and higher as the waters in the *Sanctuary*, as the soule growes more and more heated; see how *David* riseth by degrees, *Be glad in the Lord*, and then, *re-joyce*

Pl. 32. 11.

joyce ye righteous, and then, *shows for joy*
all yee that are upright in heart, the Spirit
of God will delight to carry us along
in this duty, untill it leaves our spirits in
heaven; praising God with the *Saints*
and glorious *Angels* there; *to him that*
hath and useth it shall be given; hee that
knoweth God aright, will honour him
by trusting of him; hee that honours
him by trusting him, will honour him
by *praying*; and he that honours him by
prayer, shall honour him by *praises*; he
that honours him by praises *here*, shall
perfect his praises in *heaven*; and this
will quit the labour of setting and kee-
ping the soule in tune; this trading with
God is the richest trade in the world;
when we returne *praises* to him, he re-
turnes new favours to us, and so an e-
verlasting ever-increasing intercourse
betwixt God and the soule is maintai-
ned; *David* here resolved to *praise God*,
because he had assurance of such a deli-
verance as would yeeld him a ground
of praising him.

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Mat. 25:19

Praising of God may well be called
Incense, because as it is sweet in it selfe,

praises, a
sweet In-
cense.

Gg

and

Cap. 28.

and sweet to *God*, so it sweetens all that comes from us. *Love* and *joy* are sweet in themselves, though those whom we love and joy in, should not know of our affection, nor returne the like ; but we cannot love and joy in *God*, but hee will delight in us ; when we neglect the praising of *God*, we lose both the comforts of *Gods* love, and our owne too ; It is a spirituall judgement to want or lose the sight or sense of *Gods* favours, for it is a signe of want of spirituall life, or at least livenessse ; it shewes we are not yet in the state of those whom *God* hath chosen, to set forth the riches of his glory upon.

When we consider that if we answer not kindnessse, and favour shewed unto us by men, we are esteemed unworthy of respect (as having sinned against the bond of humane society and love) wee cannot but much more take shame to our selves , when wee consider the disproportion of our carriage, and unkind behaviour towards *God* ; when in stead of being *temples* of his praise, wee become *graves* of his benefits ; what a vanity

Cap. 18.

Vnthank-
fulnes most
bainew co-
wards God.

nity is this in our nature, to stand upon exactnesse of justice, in answering petty curtesies of men, and yet to passe by the substantiall favours of God, without scarce taking notice of them? the best breeding is to acknowledge greatest respects where they are most due, and to thinke, that if unkindnesse and rudenesse be a sinne in *civility*, it is much more in *Religion*; the greatest danger of vnthankfulnesse, is in the greatest matter of all; if wee arrogate any spirituall strength to our selves in spirituall actions, wee commit either *sacriledge* in robbing God of his *due*; or *mockerie*, by praising him for that which we hold to be of our selves; if injustice be to be condemned in man, much more in denying God his due, *Religion* being the first due. It takes much from thankfulnessse, when we have common conceits of peculiar favours, *praise* is not comely in the mouth of *fooles*, God loves no *blinde sacrifice*.

Mal. 1. 8.

We should therefore have wisdome and judgement, not onely to know upon what *grounds* to be thankfull, but in

G g 2

what

Cap. 18.

Gods love
in every
mercy
chiefly to
bee looked
at.

Not to de-
lay our
praises.

what *order*, by discerning what bee the best and first favours whence the rest proceed, and which adde a worthinesse to all the rest; it is good to see blessings, as they issue from grace and mercy. It much commends any blessing, to see the love and favour of God in it, which is more to bee valued than the blessing it selfe, as it much commends any thing that comes from us, when wee put a respect of thankfulnessse, and love to God upon it; and if we observe, we shall find the unkindnesse of others to us, is but a correction of our unkindnesse to God.

In *praising God*, it is not good to *de- lay*, but take advantage of the freshnesse of the blessing; what we adde to delay, we take from *thankfulnessse*; and withall, lose the prime and first fruits of our affections; It is a wise redeeming of time, to observe the best *seasons* of thankfulnessse; a cheerefull heart will best close with a cheerefull duty; and therefore it is not good to waste so fit a temper in frivolous things, but after some contentment given to nature, let God have the fruit of his owne plant-
ing;

ing; otherwise it is even no better than the refreshing of him that standeth by a good fire, and cryeth *Ah; ah, I am warme.*

David doth not say, *I will thank God.* but *I shall praise him*; (though hee intends *that.*) I hankes is then best when it tends to *praising*, and there ends; for thankes alone shewes respect to our *owne* good onely, praises to *Gods glory*; and in particular to the glory of such *excellencies* whence the benefit comes; and from thence the soule is enlarged to thinke highly of all Gods *excellencies*.

Hanna upon particular thankes for hearing her about a *childe*, takes occasion to set out Gods other *excellencies*, and riseth higher and higher, from *one* to *many*, from the present time, to that which was to come; from particular favours to her selfe, shee stirres up others to praise God for his mercy to them; So David, *Deliver mee, O God, and my tongue shall sing of thy praises*; Hee propounds this as an ingagement to the Lord to helpe him, because it should

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Isa. 44. 16.

1 Sam. 2. 1

Psal. 51.

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Our thanks
should bee
large.

2 Sam. 30.

tend to the enlargement of his glory; he was resolved to improve Gods favour this way.

The Spirit of God workes like *new wine*, enlarging the spirit from one degree of praising God to another; and because it foresees the eternity of Gods love, (as farre as it can) it endeavours an eternity of Gods praise; a gracious heart, upon taste of favour shewed to it selfe, is presently warmed to spread the praise of God to others, and the more it sees the fruit of trusting God, and his truth in performing promise, the more it still honours that *trusting*, as knowing that it lyes upon Gods honour, *to honour* those that *honour him*; blessing will procure blessing; the soule hath never such freedome from sinne, as when it is in a thankfull frame; for *thankfulnesse* issues from a heart truly humbled, and emptied of it selfe, truly loving and rejoycing in God; and upon any sinne the spirit is grieved and straitned, and the lips sealed up in such a heart; for the conscience upon any sinne, looks upon it not onely as *disobedience* against Gods

Gods will and authority, but as *unthankfulnesse* to his goodnesse, and this melteth a godly heart most of all: when *Nathan* told *David* God had done this, and *this for him*, and was ready to doe more, he could not hold in the *confession* of his *sinne*, but relented and gave in presently.

Wee ought not onely to give *thanks*, but to be *thankfull*, to meditate and study the praises of God. Our whole life should be nothing else but a continuall blessing of his holy Name, endeavouring to bring in all we have, and to lay it out for God and his people, to see where he hath any receivers; our goodnesse is *nothing to God*, wee need bring no water to the *fountaine*, nor light to the *Sun*. Thankfulnessse is full of invention, it deviseth liberall things, though it be our duty to bee good Stewards of our talents, yet *thankfulnessse* addes a lustre, and a more gracious *acceptance*, as having more of that which God calls for.

Our praising God should not bee as sparkes out of a *flint*, but as water out

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2. Sa. 12. 8.

We should study Gods praises.

Psal. 16. 2.

Praise should be fire.

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Mic. 7. 8.

Ps. 145. 10.

The least
mercy to
be prized.

of a *spring*, naturall, ready, free, as Gods love to us is; *mercy* pleases him, so should *praises* please us; It is our happinesse, when the best part in us is exercised about the best and highest worke; it was a good speech of him that said, If God had made me a *Nightingale*, I would have sung as a *Nightingale*, but now God hath made mee a man, I will sing forth the *praises of God*, which is the worke of a Saint onely; *All thy works blesse thee, and thy Saints praise thee*; All things are either blessings in their nature, or so blessed, as they are made blessings to us by the over-ruling command of *him*, who maketh all things serviceable to *his*; even the worst things in this sense are made spirituall to Gods people against their owne nature; how great is that Goodnesse which makes even the worst things good?

Little favours come from no small love, but even from the same love that God intends the greatest things to us, and are pledges of it; the godly are more thankfull for the least favours, than worldly men for the greatest; the affection

affection of the giver inhaunces the gift.

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O then let us labour to improve, both what we have, and what wee are, to his glory: It discovers that wee *love* God, (not onely with all our *understanding*, *heart*, and *affections*, but) when with all our *might* and *power*, so farre as wee have advantage by any *part*, *relation*, or *calling* whatsoever, we endeavour to doe him service: wee cannot have a greater honour in the world, than to be honoured of God, to be abundant in this kinde.

Our time here is short, and wee shall all ere long bee called to a reckoning, therefore let us study *reall* praises. Gods blessing of us is in *deed*, and so should ours bee of him. Thanks in *words* is good, but in *deeds* is better; *leaves* are good, but *fruit* is better; and of fruit, that which *costs* us most. True *praise* requires our whole man, the *judgement* to esteeme, the *memory* to treasure up, the *will* to resolve, the *affections* to delight, the *tongue* to speake of, and the *life* to expresse the rich favours of God: what

Our praise
should be
reall.

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Rom. 11.
36.

what can we thinke of? what can wee call to minde? what can we resolve upon? what can wee speake? what can we expresse in our whole course, better than the *praises of him, of whom, and through whom, and to whom* wee and all things are?

Our whole life should speake nothing but thankfulness; every condition and place we are in, should be a witness of our thankfulness; this will make the times and places wee live in, the better for us; when wee our selves are monuments of Gods mercy, it is fit wee should bee patternes of his praises, and leave monuments to others; Wee should thinke life is given us, to doe something better than live in; wee live not to live; our life is not the end of it selfe, but the praise of the giver; God hath joyned his glory and our happiness together; it is fit that wee should referre all that is good to his glory, that hath joyned his glory to our best good, in being glorified in our salvation.

David concludes, that he should certainly

tainly praise God, because he had prayed unto him. Prayers be the seeds of praises, I have sowne, therefore I will reap; what we receive as a fruit of our prayers, is more sweet than what wee have by a generall providence.

But how doe wee know that God heares our prayers?

1. If we regard them our selves, and expect an issue; prayer is a sure adventure, we may well looke for a returne.

2. It is a signe God hath heard our prayers, when hee stirres up thankfulness aforehand upon assurance; thankfulness cannot bee without either the grace of God, by which wee are thankful, or some taste of the things we are thankfull for. God often accepts the prayer, when hee doth not grant the thing, and will give us thereby occasion of thanksgiving for his wise care, in changing one blessing for another fitter for us. God regards my prayers, when by prayer my heart is wrought to that frame which hee requires, that is, an humble subjection to him, from an acknowledgement of my wants, and his fulnesse.

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Object.

Answer.

1.

2.

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fulnesse. There is nothing stirred up in our hearts by the Spirit, no, not so much as a gracious desire, but God will answer it, if we have a spirit to wait.

3.

3. Wee may know God hath accepted our prayer, when he makes the way easie & plaine after prayer by a gracious providence ; when the course of things begin to change, and wee meet with comforts in stead of former crosses, and find our hearts quieted and encouraged against what we most feared.

4.

4. Likewise earnestnesse in prayer is a signe God heares our prayers, as fire kindled from heaven sheweth God accepts the sacrifice ; the ground of prevailing by our prayers, is, that they are put up in a gracious Name, and for persons in favour, and dictated by Gods owne Spirit ; they work in the strength of the blessed Trinity, not their owne, giving God the glory of all his excellencies.

Psal. 50. 15

It is Gods direction *to call upon him in trouble*, and it is his promise *to deliver* ; and then both his *direction* and *promise* that wee shall *glorifie him* ; When troubles

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bles stirre up *prayer*, Gods answer to them will stirre up *praises*. *David* when hee saith, *I shall praise God*, presupposes God would deliver him, that he might have ground of praising his Name. And hee knew God would deliver him, because as from faith he had prayed for deliverance, so hee knew it was the order of Gods dealing, to revive after drooping, and refresh after fainting. God knowes otherwise that our spirits would faile before him.

A thankfull disposition, is a speciall help in an afflicted condition, for *thankfulness* springs from *love*, and love *rejoiceth in suffering*. Thankfulness raises the soule higher than it selfe, it is trading with God, whereby as *we* by him, so *he* gaines by us. Therefore the Saints used this as a motive to God, that hee would grant their desires, because *the living praise him*, and not *the dead*. If God expect praise from us, sure he will put us into a condition of praise.

Act. 15. 21

Isa. 38. 19.

Unthankfulness is a sinne detestable both to God and men, and the lesse punishment it receives from humane lawes,

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lawes, the more it is punished *inwardly* by secret shame, and *outwardly* by publique hatred, if once it prove notorious. When Gods arrests come forth for denying him his tribute, he chiefly eyes an unthankfull heart, and hates all sin the worse, as there is more unthankfulness in it: the neglect of kindnesse is taken most unkindly. Why should wee load God with injuries, that loadeth us with his blessings? who would requite good with evill? Such mens mercies will prove at last so many indictments against them.

vse.

I beseech you therefore labour to bee men of praises. If in any duty wee may expect assistance, wee may in this, that altogether concernes Gods glory: the more we praise God, the more wee shall praise him. When God by grace enlarges the *will*, he intends to give the *deed*. Gods children wherein their wils are conformable to Gods will, are sure to have them fulfilled. In a fruitfull ground, a man will sow his best seed. God intends his owne glory in every mercy, and he that *praises him, glorifies him.*

Psal. 50. 23

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him. When our wills therefore carry us to that which God wills above all, wee may well expect he will satisfie our desires. The living God is a living fountaine never drawne dry, hee hath never done so much for us, but hee can and will doe more. If there bee no end of our praises, there shall be no end of his goodnesse : no way of thriving like to this. By this meanes we are sure never to be very miserable; how can hee be dejected, that by a sweet communion with God sets himselfe in heaven? nay maketh his heart a kinde of heaven, *A Temple, a holy of holies* wherein *Incense* is offered unto God. It is the sweetest branch of our Priestly office, to offer up these daily sacrifices; It is not onely the beginning, but a further entrance of our heaven upon earth, and shall bee one day our whole employment forever.

2 Cor. 6. 16

Praise is a just and due tribute for all Gods blessings; for what else especially doe the best favours of God call for at our hands? How doe all creatures praise G O D, but by *our* mouthes? It is

Praise is a
just and
due debt.

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a debt alwaies owing, and alwaies paying ; and the more wee pay, the more wee shall owe ; upon the due discharge of this debt, the soule will finde much peace. A thankfull heart to God for his blessings, is the greatest blessing of all. Were it not for a few gracious soules, what honour should God have of the rest of the unthankfull world ? which should stirre us up the more to bee trumpets of Gods praises in the midst of his enemies, because this (in some sort) hath a prerogative above our praising God in heaven ; for there GOD hath no enemies to dishonour him.

Praising
of God, A
duty with-
out excep-
tion.

Psal. 103.

This is a *duty* that none can except against, because it is especially a worke of the *heart*. All cannot shew their thankfulnesse in *giving*, or *doing* great matters, but all may expresse the willingnesse of their hearts. *All within us may praise his holy Name*, though wee have little or nothing *without us* ; and that within us is the thing God chiefly requires. Our heart is the *Altar* on which wee offer this *Incense* ; God
looks

looks not to quantity, but to proportion ; he accepts a *mite* where there is no more to bee had.

But how shall we be enabled to this great duty ?

Enter into a deep consideration of Gods favours, past, present, and to come ; think of the greatnesse and suteablenesse of them to our condition, the seasonablenesse and necessity of them every way unto us. Consider how miserable our life were without them, even without common favours ; but as for spirituall favours, that make both our naturall and civill condition comfortable, our very life were death, our light were darknesse without these. In all favours thinke not of them so much, as Gods mercy and love in Christ which sweetens them. Thinke of the freenesse of this love, and the smallnesse of thy own deserts. How many blessings doth God bestow upon us, above our deserts, yea, above our desires, nay, above our very thoughts ? He had thoughts of love to us, when wee had no thoughts of our selves. What had we been if God had

H h

rot

Cap. 28.

Quest.

Answ.

How we may attain to praise God in some acceptable manner;

I.

A deepe consideration of favours.

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not beene good unto us ? How many blessings hath God bestowed upon us, that we never prayed for ? and yet wee are not so ready to *praise God*, as to pray unto him ; this more desire of what wee want, than esteeming of what we have, shews too much prevailing of *self-love*.
But

2.

By comparing our selves with others.

Secondly, comparing also our selves with others, will adde a great lustre to Gods favour, considering wee are all hewed out of one Rocke, and differ nothing from the meanest, but in Gods free love. Who are we that God should single us out for the glory of his rich mercy ?

3.

That Gods blessings to us are, as if we only were cared for.

Considering likewise, *that the blessings of God to us, are such as if none but wee had them, and God cares for us, as if hee had none else to care for in the world besides.* These things well pondered, should set the greater price upon Gods blessings; what are wee in nature and grace, but Gods blessings ? What is in us, about us, above us ? What see wee, taste wee, enjoy we, but blessings ? All wee have or hope to have, are but dead favours

to

to us, unlesse wee put life into them by a spirit of thankfulness. And shall we bee as dead as the earth, as the stones wee tread on? Shall wee live as if wee were resolved G O D should have no praise by us? Shall we make our selves God, ascribing all to our selves? Nay, shall wee (as many doe) fight against God with his owne favours, and turne Gods blessings against himselfe? Shall wee abuse peace to security? Plenty to ease, promises to presumption, gifts to pride? How can wee please the devill better than thus doing? Oh! the wonderfull patience of God, to continue life to those whose life is nothing else, but a warring against him the giver of life.

As God hath thoughts of love to us, so should our thoughts be of praises to him, and of doing good in our places to others for his sake. Thinke with thy selfe, Is there any I may honour God by relieving, comforting, counselling? Is there any of *Ionathans* race? Is there any of Christs deare ones? I will doe good to them, that they together with

2 Sam. 9.1

Psal. 118.1

H h 2

me,

Cap. 28.

Psal. 103. 1

The excellent use of
Thanksgiving.

mee, and for mee may praise God. As *David* here checks himselfe for the failing and disquietnesse of his spirit, and as a cure thereof, thinks of praising God: So let us (in the like case) stirre up our soules as hee did, and say, *Praise the Lord, O my soule, and all that is within me set forth his holy Name.* We never use our spirits to better purpose, then when by that light we have from God, wee stirre them up to looke back againe to him.

By this it will appeare to what good purposes wee had a being here in this world, and were brought into communion with Christ by the Gospel. The carriage of all things to the right end, shewes, whose we are, and whither we tend. It abundantly appeares by Gods revealing of himselfe many wayes to us, as by *Promises, Sacraments, Sabbaths, &c.* that hee intended to raise up our hearts to this heavenly duty. The whole gracious dispensation of God in Christ tends to this, that our carriage should be nothing else, but an expression of Thankfulness to him; that by a
free

free, cheerefull and gracious disposition, wee might shew we are the people of Gods free grace, set at liberty from the spirit of bondage, *to serve him without feare*, with a voluntary child-like service, *all the dayes of our lives.*

Cap. 29.

Luke 1.74

CAP. XXIX.

*Of Gods manifold salvation for his people.
And why open, or expressed in the countenance.*

I Proceed.

[*Hee is the salvation of my countenance.*]

As David strengthens his trust in God, by reason fetcht from the future goodnes of GOD apprehended by faith, so hee strengthens that reason with another reason fetcht from God, whom he apprehends here as *the salvation of his countenance*. We need reason against reason, and reason upon reason, to steale and strengthen the soule against the on-set of contrary reasons.

H h 3

Hee

Cap. 29.

He is the salvation of my countenance: that is, He will so save as I shall see, and my enemies shall see it; and upon seeing, my countenance shall bee cheered and lifted up; Gods saving kindnesse shall be read in my countenance, so that all who look on me, shall say, God hath spoken peace to my soule, as well as brought peace to my condition.

That God
is not only
salvation,
but salvati-
ons to his
people.
*mille malis
species, mille
salutis erunt*

He saith not *salvation*, but *salvations*: because as our life is subject to many miseries, in *soule, body, and state*, publique and private, &c. so God hath many *salvations*: If wee have a thousand troubles, hee hath a thousand wayes of help; as hee hath more blessings than one, so hee hath more salvations than one. He saves our soules from sinne, our bodies from danger, and our estates from trouble. *Hee is the Redeemer of his people*; and not onely so, but with him is *plenteous redemption* of all persons, of all parts both of body and soule, from all ill, both of sinne and misery, for all times, both now and hereafter. He is an everlasting salvation.

Psa. 130 7.

David doth not say, God will save me;

me; but God is salvation it selfe, and nothing but salvation. Our sins onely stop the current of his mercy, but it being above all our sins, will soon scatter that cloud, remoove that stop, and then wee shall see and feele nothing but salvation from the Lord. *All his waies are mercy and peace* to a repentant soule that casts it selfe upon him.

Cap. 29.

Pi. 25. 10.

Christ himselfe is nothing else but salvation cloathed in our flesh. So olde *Simeon* conceived of him, when he had him in *his armes*, and was willing there-upon to yeeld up his spirit to God, having seene Christ the salvation of God: when we embrace Christ in the armes of our Faith, wee embrace nothing but salvation. Hee makes up that sweet name, given him by his Father, and brought from heaven by an Angell, to the full: a name, in the Faith of which, it is impossible for any beleeving soule to sinke.

Luke 2. 29

Luke 2. 14

The devill in trouble presents God to us as a revenging *destroyer*, and unbelcefe presents him under a false vizard; but the skill of *faith* is, to present

Hh 4

him

Cap. 29.
Think of
God as a
Saviour in
trouble.

Psal 68.20

Whither
to flee in
our trou-
bles.

him as a Saviour clothed with salvation. Wee should not so much looke what destruction the Devill and his threaten, as what salvation God promiseth. To God belongs *the issues of death*, and of all other troubles, which are lesser deaths. Cannot hee that hath vouchsafed an issue in Christ from eternall death, vouchsafe an issue from all temporall evils? If hee will raise our bodies, can he not raise our conditions? Hee that brought us into trouble, can easily make a way out of it when hee pleaseth. This should bee a ground of resolute and absolute obedience, even in our greatest extremities, considering God will either deliver us (from death, or by death, and) at length out of death.

So then, when we are in any danger, wee see whither to goe for salvation, even to him that is nothing else but *salvation*; but then wee must *trust* in him (as *David* doth) and conceive of him as *salvation*, that wee may trust in him. If we will not trust in *salvation*, what will we trust in? and if *salvation* it selfe cannot

not save us, what can? out of salvation there is nothing but destruction, which those that seeke it any where out of God, are sure to meet with. How pitifull then is their case, who goe to a destroyer for salvation? that seeke for help from hell?

Here also we see to whom to returne praise in all our deliverances, even to the God of our salvation. The *Virgin Mary* was stirred up to magnifie the Lord, but why? *Her spirit rejoiced in God her Saviour*. Whosoever is the instrument of any good, yet salvation is of the Lord; whatsoever brings it, hee sends it. Hence in their holy Feasts for any deliverance, the cup they drank of, was called *the Cup of salvation*: and therefore *David* when he summons his thoughts, *what to render unto God?* hee resolves upon this, to take *the Cup of salvation*. But alwaies remember this, that when wee thinke of God as *salvation*, wee must thinke of him as he is in Christ to his. For, so every thing in God is saving, even his most terrible Attributes of *justice* and *power*: out of Christ,

Cap. 29.

Whom to
returne
Praise to
in all our
deliveran-
ces.
Luke 1.

Pl. 116. 13

Cap. 19.

Iohn 14. 6

God first
cheeres
the heart,
and then
the out-
ward man.

Christ, the sweetest things in God are terrible. Salvation it selfe will not save out of Christ, who is the onely way of salvation, called the way, the truth, and the life.

David addeth, (*Hee is the salvation of my countenance*) that is, hee will first speake salvation to my soule, and say, *I am thy salvation*; and when the heart is cheered (which is as it were *the Sun of this little world*) the beames of that joy will shine in the countenance. *True joy begins at the center, and so passeth to the circumference the outward man.* The countenance is as the glasse of the soule, wherein you may see the naked face of the soule, according as the severall affections thereof stand. In the countenance of an understanding creature, you may see more than a bare countenance. The spirit of one man may see the countenance of anothers inner man in his outward countenance: which hath a speech of its owne, and declares what the heart saith, and how it is affected.

Quest.

But how comes God to be the salvation of our countenance?

1

I answer: God onely graciously shines in the face of Jesus Christ, which we with the eye of faith beholding, receive those beames of his grace, and reflect them back againe. God shineth upon us first, and wee shine in that *light of his countenance* upon us. The joy of salvation, (especially of spirituall and eternall salvation) is the onely true joy: all other salvations end at last in destruction, and are no further comfortable than they issue from Gods saving love.

God will have the body partake with the soule; as in matter of *griefe*, so in matter of *joy*, the lanthorn shines in the light of the Candle within.

Againe, *God brings forth the joy of the heart into the countenance, for the further spreading and multiplying of joy to others.*

Next unto the sight of the sweet countenance of God, is the beholding of the cheerefull countenance of a Christian friend, rejoycing from true grounds. Whence it is that the joy of one becomes the joy of *many*, and the joyes of many meet in *one*; by which meanes, as many lights together make the greater light,

Csp. 19.
Answ.

Pla 51. 11.

I.
Why God will have the salvation of his people appear openly.

2.

Cap. 29.

Psal. 147.

Psal. 69. 6.

3.

light, so many lightsome spirits make the greater light of spirit : and so God receiveth the more praise, which makes him so much to delight in the prosperity of his children. Hence it is, that in any deliverance of Gods people, *the righteous doe compasse them about*, to know *what God hath done for their soules*; and keep a spirituall Feast with them in partaking of their joy. And the godly have cause to joy in the deliverance of other Christians, because they suffered in their afflictions, and it may bee in their sinnes the cause of them; which made them somewhat ashamed. Whence it is, that *Dauids great desire was, that those who feared God might not bee ashamed because of him* : insinuating that those who feare Gods Name, are ashamed of the falls of Gods people. Now when God delivers them, this reproach is removed, and those that had part in their sorrow, have part in their joy.

Againe, God will have salvation so open, that it shall appeare in the countenance of his people, the more to daunt

daunt and vexe the enemies. *Cainish* hypocrites hang downe their heads, when God lifts up the countenance of their brethren; when the countenance of Gods children cleares up, then their enemies hearts and looks are cloudy. *Ieruselems joy is Babylons sorrow.* It is with the Church and her enemies as it is with a ballance, the scales whereof when one is up the other is downe. Whilst Gods people are under a cloud, carnall people insult over the, as if they were men deserted of God. Whereupon they hang downe their heads, and the rather, because they thinke that by reason of their sins, Christ and his Religion will suffer with them. Hence *Dauids* care was, that the miseries of Gods people *should not bee told in Gath.* The chiefe reason why the enemies of the Church gnash their teeth at the sight of Gods gracious dealing, is, that they take the rising of the Church, to bee a presage of their ruine. A lesson which *Hamans* wife had learned.

2 Sam. 1.
20.

Esth. 6. 13.

This is a comfort to us in these times of *Jacobs* trouble and *Zions* sorrow: The captivity

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Pl. 126.1.

Mic. 7.8.

Zach. 12.2

Luk. 18.5.

captivity of the Church shall returne,
as rivers in the South. Therefore the
 Church may say, *Rejoyce not over me, O*
my enemy, though I am fallen, I shall rise
again. Though Christs Spouse be now
 as black as the Pots, yet shee shall bee
 white as the Dove. If there were not
 great dangers, where were the glory of
 Gods great deliverance? The Church
 at length will bee as *a Cup of trembling,*
 and as *a burthensome stone.* The blood of
 the Saints cry, their enemies violence
 cries, the prayers of the Church cry for
 deliverance, and vengeance upon the
 enemies of the Church: and (as that
importunate widow) will at length pre-
 vaile. Shall the importunity of one
 poore woman prevaile with an *unrighteous*
Iudge? and shall not the prayers of
 many that cry unto the righteous God
 take effect? If there were Armies of
 Prayers, as there are Armies of men,
 wee should see the streame of things
 turned another way. A few *Moseses* in
 the Mount, would doe more good than
 many souldiers in the valley. If wee
 would lift up our *hearts* and *hands* to
 God,

God, he would lift up our countenance. But alas, wee either pray not, or crosse our owne prayers for want of love to the truth of God and his people.

It is wee that keepe Antichrist and his faction alive, to plague the unthankfull world. The strength he hath is not from his owne cause, but from our want of zeale; we hinder those *Halleluiabs* by private brabbles, coldnesse and indifferencie in Religion. The Church begins at this time a little to lift up her head againe: Now is the time to follow God with prayers, that hee would perfect his owne worke, and plead his owne cause; that he would be revenged not onely of ours, but his enemies: that he would wholly free his Church from that miserable bondage. These beginnings give our faith some hold to be encouraged to goe to God, for the fulfilling of his gracious promise, that the Church may rejoyce in the *salvation of the Lord*. God doth but look for some to seeke unto him: Christ doth but stay untill hee is awaked by our prayers. But it is to bee feared, that
God

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God hath not yet perfected his worke in *Zion*. The Church is not yet fully prepared for a full and glorious deliverance. If God had once his ends in the humiliation of the Church for sinnes past, with resolution of reformation for the time to come, then this age perhaps might *see the salvation of the Lord*, which the generations to come shall be witnesse of: *Wee should see Zion in her perfect beauty*. The generations of those that came out of *Egypt* saw and enjoyed the pleasant land which their progenitors were shut out of: who by reason of their murmuring, and looking back to *Egypt*, and forgetfulnesse of the wonders which GOD had done for, and before them, perished in the wilderness.

Vse.

There is little cause therefore of envying the present flourishings of the enemies of the Church, and of joyning and colluding with them; for it will prove the wisest resolution to resolve to fall and rise with the Church of Christ, considering the enemies themselves shall say, God hath done great things

Cap. 19.

Rev. 21. 24

things for them: Kings shall lay their Crowns at *Christs* feet, and bring all their glory to the *Church*.

And for every Christian, this may be a comfort, that though their light for a time may be eclipsed, yet it shall break forth. *David* at this time was accounted an enemy of the State, and had a world of false imputations laid upon him, which hee was very sensible of; yet (wee see here) hee knew at length God would bee the *salvation of his countenance*.

But some (as *Gideon*) may object, If God intend to be so gracious, why is it thus with us?

The answer is, *Salvation* is Gods *owne* worke, *humbling* and casting downe is his *strange worke*, whereby he comes to his owne worke. For, when he intends to save, he will seeme to destroy first: and when hee will justifie, he will condemne first: whom he will revive, hee will kill first. Grace and goodnesse countenanced by God, have a native inbred Majesty in them, which maketh the face to shine, and borroweth not

Object.

Ans.

Cap. 19.

Dan. 12.

its lustre from without, which God at length will have to appear in its owne likenesse, howsoever malice may cast a vaile thereon, and disguise it for a time. And though wickednesse (as it is base borne, and a child of darknesse) may shelter it selfe under authority a while, yet it shall hide it selfe, and runne into corners. The comfort of comforts is, and at that great day (the day of all dayes) that day of the *Revelation of the righteous Iudgement of God*; the righteous shall then shine as the *Sunne* in the *firmament*, then Christ will come to be glorious in his Saints, and will be the *salvation of the countenance* of all his. Then all the workes of darknesse shall be driven out of countenance, and adjudged to the place from whence they came. In the meane time let us (with *David*) support our selves with the hopes of these times.

CAP.

C A P. XXX
Of God, our God, and of particular appli-
cation.

[**MY** God.] These words imply a special interest that the holy man had in God, (as his God) being the ground of all which was said before; both of the duty of trusting, and of praising, and of the salvation that hee expected from God. He is my God, therefore be not disquieted but trust him. He is my God, therefore hee will give mee matter to praise him, and will be the salvation of my countenance; God hath some speciall ones in the world, to whom he doth as it were passe over himselfe, and whose God he is by vertue of a more speciall covenant; whence we have these excellent expressions, *I will be your God, and you shall be my people: I will be your Father, and you shall be my sonnes and daughters.* Since the fall we having lost our communion with God the chiefe good, our happinesse stands in recovering againe
I i 2 fellowship,

That Davids interest in God was a special foundation of his trusting in God.

Jer. 31. 33.
2 Cor. 6. 18

Cap. 30.

fellowship with him. For this end wee were created, and for this redeemed, and for effecting of this, the Word and Sacraments are sanctified to us, yea, and for this end God himselfe (out of the bowels of his compassion) vouchsafed to enter into a gracious covenant with us, founded upon Jesus Christ, and his satisfaction to divine justice; so that by Faith wee become one with him, and receive him, as offered of his Father to be all in all to us.

Why Christ
hath his
name Im-
manuel.

1 Pet. 3. 18

Hence it is, that Christ hath his name *Immanuel*, *God with us*. Not onely because he is *God*, and *man* too, (both natures meeting in one person) but because being God in our nature, he hath undertooke this office to bring God and us together. The maine end of Christs coming and suffering, was to reconcile, and to gather together in one; & (as *S. Peter* expresseth it) *to bring men againe to God*. *Immanuel* is the bond of this happy agreement, and appeares for ever in heaven to make it good. As the comfort hereof is great, so the foundation of it is sure and everlasting. God will

will be our God, *so long* as he is Christs God; and *because* hee is Christs God. Thus the Father of the faithfull, and all other holy men before Christ, apprehended God to be their God in the *Messias* to come. Christ was the ground of their interest. Hee was *yesterday* to them, as well as *today* to us. Hence it is that God is called the *portion* of his people, and they his *jewels*: he their onely *rock* and *strong Tower*, and they his peculiar ones.

Well may we wonder that the great God should stoop so low, to enter into such a covenant of grace and peace, founded upon such a Mediator, with such utter enemies, base creatures, sinfull dust and ashes as we are. This is the wonderment of Angels, a torment of devils, and glory of our nature and persons; and will be matter of admiration, and praising God unto us for all eternity.

As God offereth himselfe to be ours in Christ (else durst we lay no claime to him) so there must be in us an appropriating grace of *faith*, to lay hold of

Cap. 30.
Ioh. 20. 10

Heb. 13.
Psa. 73. 26
Mal. 3. 25.
Psal. 71.

Vse.

That there must be on our part an appropriating of God as he tendereth himselfe to be our God.

Cap. 30.

this offer. *David* saith here, *My God.* But by what spirit? by a spirit of faith, which looking to Gods offer, maketh it his owne whatsoeuer it layes hold of. God offereth himselfe in covenant, and Faith catcheth hold thereon presently. With a gracious offer of God, there goeth a gracious touch of his Spirit to the soule, giving it sight and strength, whereby (being ayded by the same Spirit) it layeth hold on God shewing himselfe in love. God saith to the soule, *I am thy salvation*, and the soule saith againe, *Thou art my God.* Faith is nothing else but a spirituall echo, returning that voice back againe, which God first speakes to the soule. For what acquaintance could the soule claime with so glorious a Majesty, if he should not first condescend so low, as to speake peace, and whisper secretly to the soule, that he is *our* loving God and Father, and *wee* his peculiar ones in Christ, that our sinnes are all pardoned, his justice fully satisfied, and our persons freely accepted in his deare Sonne.

But to come more particularly to the

the words [*My God.*] The words are pregnant ; in the wombe of them, all that is graciously & comfortably good is contained ; they are the spring head of all particular blessings. All particular *Relations* and *Titles* that it pleaseth God to take upon him, have their strength from hence, that God is *our God*. More cannot be said, and lesse will not serve the turne. Whatsoever else wee have, if we have not God, it will prove but an *empty cisterne* at last. He is our proper element, every thing desires to live in its owne element , fishes in the Sea, Birds in the ayre ; in this they are best preserved.

There is a greater strength in this [*My God*] than in any other Title, it is more than if he had said *My King*, or *My Lord* ; these are words of sovereignty and wisdom ; but this implies not onely infinite power, sovereignty, and wisdom, but likewise infinite *bounty* and provident care ; so that when wee are said to be *Gods people*, the meaning is, that wee are not onely such over whom God hath a power and com-

Cap. 30.

I

2

Particular
faith neces-
sary, and
why.

I

2

Gal. 2. 20.

mand, but such as towards whom hee shewes a *loving and peculiar respect*.

In the words is implied, 1. A propriety and interest in God. 2. An improvement of the same for the quieting of the soule.

David (here) layes a *particular* claim, by a particular *faith* unto God. The reason is, 1. The vertue of *faith* is as to lay hold, so to appropriate to it selfe, and make *its owne* whatever it layes hold on, and it doth no more in this, than God gives it leave by his gracious promises to doe.

2 As God offers, so *faith* receives, but God offers himselfe in *particular* to the beleeving soule by his Spirit, therefore our *faith* must bee particular. That which the Sacraments seal, is a peculiar interest in Christ. This is that which hath alwaies upheld the Saints of God, and that which is ever joyned with the life of Christ in us. *The life that I live* (saith S. Paul) *is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himselfe for me.* The spirit of *faith* is a spirit of application.

This

This is implied in all the *Articles* of our Faith; we beleeve God to be *our* Father, and Christ to be *borne for us*, that he *died* for us, and *rose againe* for our good, and now sits at the right hand of God, making requests *for us* in particular.

Cap. 30.

3. This is that which distinguisheth the faith of a true Christian from all hypocrites and cast-awayes whatsoever. Were it not for this word of possession [*Mine*] the devill might say the *Creed* to as good purpose as we; he beleeves there is a God, and a Christ, but that which torments him is this, he can say [*My*] to never an Article of Faith.

3.

4. A generall apprehension of Gods goodnesse and mercy may stand with desperation. Take away *My* from God, and take away God himselfe in regard of comfort; what comfort was it for *Adam*, when hee was shut out of Paradise, to looke upon it after hee had lost it? The more excellencies are in God, the more our grieve if we have not our part in them: the very life blood of the

4

Tolle meum
soll: Drum.

Cap. 30.

the Gospell, lyes in a speciall application of particular mercy to our selves. All relations that God and Christ have taken upon them, imply a necessity of application ; What if God be a *rock* of salvation if we doe not rest upon him ? What if he be a *foundation*, and we doe not build on him ? What if hee offers himselfe as a husband, if we will not accept of him, what avails it us ? How can we rejoyce in the salvation of our soules, unlesse we can in particular say, *I rejoyce in God my Saviour ?*

5.

5. Without particular application, we can neither entertaine the love of God, nor returne love againe, by which meanes wee lose all the comfort God intends us in his word, which of purpose was written for our solace and refreshment ; Take away *particular faith*, and we let out all the spirits of cheerefull and thankfull obedience.

This possessive particle [*My*] hath place in all the golden chaine of our salvation. The first spring of all Gods claime to us as his is in his *election* of us ; we were by grace *his* before we were ; those

those that are his from that *eternal love*, he gives to *Christ*; this is hid in the brest of God, till he calls us out of the rest of the world into *Cōmunion with Christ*. In answering of which call (by *faith*) wee become one with *Christ*, and so one with him. Afterwards in *justification* wee feele God experimentally to be reconciled unto us; whence arises joy and inward peace. And then upon further *sanctification* God delights in us as *his*, bearing his owne image, and wee from a likenesse to God, delight in him as *ours* in his *Christ*; and so this mutual interest betwixt God and us, continues untill at last God becomes *all in all* unto us.

But how can a man that is not yet in the state of grace say with any comfort, [My God?]

Object.

Whilest a man regards iniquity in his heart, without any remorse or dislike of the same, if hee saith *My God*, his heart will give his tongue the lye, however in an outward profession, and opinion of others, he may beare himselfe as if God were *his*, upon false grounds. For there

Ans.

Cap. 30.

there can be no more in a Conclusion, than it hath from the Principle and Premises out of which it is drawne. The *principle* (here) is, that God is the God of all that *trust in him*. Now if wee can make it good, that wee truly trust in God, we may safely conclude of comfort from him; for the more certaine clearing of which, try your selves by the signes of trust delivered.

It is no easie matter to say in truth of heart [*My God*] the flesh will still labour for supremacie, God should be *all in all* unto us, but this will not be till these bodies of flesh (together with the body of sinne) be laid aside. He that sayes, God is [*My God,*] and doth not yeeld up himselfe unto God, raiseth a building without a foundation, layeth a *claim* without a *tittle*, and claimeth a *tittle* without an *evidence*, reckoning upon a bargain, without consent of the party with whom he would contract.

But if a man shall out of the sight and sense of sin, thirst after mercy in Christ, and call upon God for pardon, *then* God *who* (is a God hearing prayer, and) delighteth

Psal. 65. 2.

lighteth to be knowne by the name of *mercifull*, will be ready to close and meet with the desire of such a soule, so farre as to give it leave to relye upon him for mercy, (and that without presumption) untill hee further discovers himselfe graciously unto it; upon sense of which grace, the Soule may be encouraged to lay a farther claime unto God, having further acquaintance with him. Hence are those exhortations so oft in the *Prophets*, to *turne unto the Lord our God*, because upon our *first* resolution to turne unto God, wee shall finde him alwayes ready to answer those desires, that hee stirs up by his owne Spirit in us.

Zach. 1. 3.

Wee are not therefore to stay our turning unto God, till wee feele him saying to our hearts, *I am thy God*, but when hee prevents us by his grace, inabling us to desire grace, let us follow the work begun, in the strength of what grace we have, & then God wil further manifest himselfe in mercy to us.

Yet God before we can make any thing towards him, letteth into our hearts

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hearts some few beams of mercy, thereby drawing us unto him, and reaching us out a hint to lay hold upon.

And as sinne causeth a distance betwixt God and us, so the guilt of sinne in the conscience, causes further strangeness, insomuch that we dare not look up to heaven, till God open a little crevice to let in a little light of comfort (at least) into our soules, whereby wee are by little and little drawn neerer to him. But this light at the first is so little, that in regard of the greater sense of *sinne*, and a larger desire of *grace*, the soul reckons the same as no light at all, in comparison of what it desires and seekes after. Yet the comfort is, that this dawning light will at length cleere up to a perfect day.

Thus we see how this claime of *God* to be *our God*, is still in *growth* untill full assurance, and that there is a great distance betwixt the first *act* of faith in cleaving to God, offering himselfe in Christ to be *ours*, and between the *last fruit* of faith, the cleere and comfortable feeling, that God is *our God* indeed.

We

Wee first by *faith* apply our selves to God, and then apply God to us, to be ours; The first is the conflicting exercise of faith, the last is the triumph of faith; therefore *faith* properly is not assurance. And to comfort us the more, the promises are specially made to the act of faith, fuller assurance is the reward of faith.

If God hath not chosen me in Christ to be his, what ground have I to trust in him? I may cast away my selfe upon a vain confidence.

We have no ground (at first) to trouble our selves about Gods election. Secret things belong to God; Gods revealed will is, *That all that beleeve in Christ shall not perish.* It is my duty therefore knowing this, to beleeve, by doing whereof, I put that question [*whether God be mine or no?*] out of all question: for all that beleeve in Christ, are *Christs*, and all that are *Christs* are *Gods*. It is not my duty to look to Gods secret counsell, but to his open offer, invitation and command, and thereupon to adventure my soule. And this adventure

Cap. 30.

Object.

Ans.

Ioh. 3. 15.

Cap. 30.

Quis polli-
cetur serēti
proventum;
naviganti
portum, mi-
litanti victo-
riam? Ideo
Nauigantes
vitam ven-
tis credunt,
&c.
Salvian.
Ideo terrib
frumenta
credimus, ut
cum usuris
credita reci-
piamus.

ture of *Faith* will bring at length a rich returne unto us. In warre men will adventure their lives, because they thinke some will escape, and why not they? In traffique beyond the Seas many adventure great estates, because some grow rich by a good returne, though many miscarry. The Husbandman adventures his seed, though sometime the yeare proves so bad, that he never sees it more: And shall not we make a spirituall adventure in casting our selves upon God, when wee have so good a warrant as his *command*, and so good an encouragement as his *promise*; that hee will not faile those that relye on him? God bids us *draw neare to him*, and he will *draw neare to us*. Whilest wee in Gods owne wayes draw neare to him, and labour to entertaine good thoughts of him, hee will delight to shew himself favourable unto us. Whilest we are striving against an unbelceeing heart, he will come in and help us, and so fresh light will come in.

Pretend not thy unworthinesse and inability, to keep thee off from God,
for

Cap. 30.

for this is the way to keep thee so still; if any thing help us, it must be God; and if ever he help us, it must be by casting our selves upon him: for then hee will reach out himselfe unto us in the promise of mercy to pardon our sinne, and in the promise of grace to sanctifie our natures. It was a good resolution of the Lepers, *If we enter into the City, the famine is there, and we shall dye (say they) if we sit still, we shall dye also: Let us therefore fall into the hand of assyrians, if they save us, we shall live, if they kill us, we shall dye*: So we should reason, If we sit still under the load of our sinne, we shall dye; if we put our selves into the hands of Christ, if hee save us wee shall live, if he save us not, we shall but dye. Nay surely, he will not suffer us to dye. Did ever Christ thrust any back from him, that put themselves upon him? Unlesse it were, by that meanes to draw them the nearer unto him, as wee see in the *Woman of Canaan*. His denyall was but to increase her importunity. We should therefore doe as she did, gather all arguments to help our faith. Suppose I

2 Reg. 7. 4

Omnia in
rebus hu-
manis spes
futurorum
agunt.

Cap. 32.

am a dogge (saith shee) yet I am one of the family, and therefore have right *to the crummes that fall*. So Lord, I have beene a sinner, yet I am thy creature; and not onely so, but such a creature as thou hast set over the rest of the works of thy hands; and not onely so, but one whom thou hast admitted into thy Church by *Baptisme*, whereby thou wouldst binde me to give my selfe unto thee before hand; & more than this, thou hast brought me under the means, and therein hast shewed thy will concerning my turning towards thee. Thou hast not onely offered mee conditions of peace, but wooed mee by thy Ministers to give up my selfe unto thee, as thine in thy Christ. Therefore I dare not suspect thy good meaning towards mee, or question thy intendment, but resolve to take thy counsell, and put my selfe upon thy mercy. I cannot thinke if thou hadst meant to cast mee away, and not to owne mee for thine, thou wouldst ever have kindled these desires in me. But it is not this state I rest in, my purpose is to wait upon thee,
untill

untill thou dost manifest thy selfe farther unto mee. It is not common favours that will content mee (though I be unworthy of these) because I heare of choyce blessings towards thy chosen people, that thou entrest into a peculiar covenant withall, *sure mercies*, and such as accompany salvation. These be the favours I wait for at thy hand. *O visit me with the salvation of thy chosen.* O remember mee with the favour of thy people, that I may see *the good of thy chosen*. Whilest the soule is thus exercised, more sweetnesse falls upon the *will* and *affections*, whereby they are drawne still nearer unto God. The soule is in a getting and a thriving condition; For God delights to shew himself gracious to those that strive to bee well perswaded of him, concerning his readinesse to shew mercy to all that look towards him in Christ. In worldly things, how doe wee cherish hopes upon little grounds? if there shineth never so little hope of gaine or preferment, wee make after it. Why then should wee forsake our owne mercy, (which God offers to

Isay 55.3.

I. L. 106.4, 5

Cap. 30.

be our owne, if we will embrace it) having such certain grounds for our hope to rest on?

1 Reg. 30.
35.

It was the policie of the servants of *Benhadad* to watch if any word of comfort fell from the King of Israel, and when hee named *Benhadad* his Brother, they *catched* presently at that, and cheered themselves. *Faith* hath a catching quality at whatsoever is neare to lay hold on. Like the branches of the Vine, it windeth about that which is next, and stayes it selfe upon it, spreading farther and farther still. If *nature* taught *Benhadads* servants to lay hold upon any word of comfort that fell from the mouth of a cruell King; Shall not *grace* teach Gods children to lye in wait for any token that hee shall shew for good to them? How should we stretch forth the armes of our *Faith* to him, that *stretcheth out his armes* all the day long to a rebellious people: God will never shut his bosome against those, that in an humble obedience flye unto him: wee cannot conceive too graciously of God. Can wee have a fairer offer, than for
God

Esay 65.2.

God in Christ to make over himselfe unto us ? which is more than if hee should make over a thousand worlds ; therefore our chiefe care should be, first by *faith* to make this good, and then to make it usefull unto us, by living upon it as our chiefeest portion ; which wee shall doe, 1. By proving God to be our God in particular ; 2. By improving of it in all the passages of our lives.

CAP. XXXI.

Means of proving and evidencing to our soules, that God is our God.

NOW we prove it to our selves, that God is ours, when we take him at his offer ; when wee bring nothing but a sense of our owne emptinesse with us, and a good conceit of his *faithfulnessse* and ability to doe us good ; when wee answer God in the particular passages of salvation, which wee cannot doe, till hee begins first unto us. Therefore if wee be Gods, it is a certaine signe that

I.

Cap. 31.

1 Ioh. 4.19

1 Ioh. 20.
16.Dicat ani-
ma, *secura*
dicat, *Deus*
meus es tu,
qui dixit a-
nime nostre
Salus tua
*ego sum.*Aug. in
Psa. 132.
Cant. 6.3.

2.

God is *ours*. If we chuse him, we may conclude he hath *chosen us* first. If wee love him, we may know that *he hath loved us* first. If we apprehend him, it is because he hath apprehended us first. Whatsoever affection we shew to God, it is but a reflection of his first to us. If cold and dark bodies have light and heat in them, it is because the Sun hath shined upon them first. *Mary* answers not *Rabboni*, till Christ said *Mary* to her. If wee say to God I am thine, it is because he hath first said unto us, thou art mine; after which, the voice of the faithfull soule is, *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine*. We may know Gods minde to us in heaven, by the returne of our hearts upwards againe to him: Onely as the reflected beames are weaker than the direct, so our affections in their returne to God, are farre weaker than his love falling upon us. God will be to us whatsoever we make him by our *faith* to be; when by grace we answer his condition of *trusting*, then hee becomes ours to use for our good.

2. We may know God to be [*Our God*]

God] when wee pitch and plant all our happineſſe in him, when the deſires of our ſoules are towards him, and wee place all our contentment in him. As this word [*my*] is a terme of *appropriation* ſpringing from a ſpeciall faith; ſo it is a word of *love* and *peculiar affection*, ſhewing that the ſoule doth reſpoſe and reſt it ſelfe quietly and ſecurely upon God. Thus *David* proves God to be *his* God, by *early ſeeking of him*, by *thirſting*, and *longing after his preſence*, and that upon good reaſon, *becauſe Gods loving kindneſſe was better to him than life*; This he knew would ſatiſſie his ſoule *as with marrow and fatneſſe*. So *S. Paul* proved *Chriſt* to be his Lord, by *accounting all things elſe as dung and drotſe in compariſon of him*.

Psal. 63. 1,
2, 3, &c.

Phil. 3. 8.

Then we make God *our* God, and ſet a Crown of Maieſty upon his head, when wee ſet up a Throne for him in our hearts, where ſelfe-love *before* had ſet up the creature above him; when the heart is ſo unloofed from the world, that it is ready to part with any thing for Gods ſake, giving him *now* the

Cap. 31.

supremacy in our hearts, and bringing downe every high thought in captivity to him ; making him our *trust*, our *love*, our *joy*, our *delight*, our *fear*, our *all* ; and whatsoever we esteem or affect else, to esteem and affect it under him, in him, and for him ; When we cleave to him above all, depending upon him as our chiefe good, and contenting our selves in him, as all-sufficient to give our soules fit and full satisfaction. When we resigne up our selves to his gracious government, to doe and suffer what he will, offering our selves and all our spirituall services as sacrifices to him. When *faith* brings God into the soule as *ours*, we not onely *love him*, but love him *dearely*, making it appeare , that when wee are at good tearmes with God, we are at a point for other things. How many are there that will adventure the losse of the love of God, for a thing of nothing ? and redeeme the favour of men with the losse of Gods. Certaine it is whatsoever we esteeme, or affect most, that whatsoever it be in it selfe, yet we make it our God. The best

*Amor tuus,
Deus tuus.*

best of us all may take shame to our selves herein, in that wee doe not give God his due place in us, but set up some *Idoll* or other in our hearts above him.

When the soule can without hypocrisie say [*My God*] it ingageth us to universall and unlimited obedience, we shall be ambitious of doing that which may be acceptable and well pleasing to him; and therefore this is prefixed as a ground before the *Commandements*, enforcing obedience; *I am the Lord thy God; therefore thou shalt have no other Gods before me*; whomsoever else wee obey, it must be *in the Lord*, because we see a beame of Gods authority in them; and it is no prejudice to any inferiour authority, to preferre Gods authority before it, in case of difference one from the other.

When we know we are a *peculiar people*, wee cannot but be *zealous of good workes*. *If I be a Father, where is mine honour?* Speciall relations are speciall enforcements to duty.

4. The Spirit of God which knowes the deep things of God, and the depths of

Cap. 31.

3.

Exod. 10.

*Nemini sit
injuris cui
proponitur
Deus.*

Tit. 2. 14.

Mal. 1. 6.

4.

Cap. 31.

2 Tim. 1.
12.

Lam. 3. 14

of our hearts, doth reveale this mutuall interest betwixt God, and those that are *his*, it being a principall worke of the Spirit to seale this unto the soule, by discovering such a cleare and particular light in the use of meanes, as swaith the soule to yeeld up it selfe wholly to GOD. When wee truly *trust*, we may say with S. Paul, *I know whom I have trusted*; he knew both *that* he trusted, and *whom* he trusted. The Spirit of God that reveales God to be ours, and stirres up faith in him, both reveales this trust to our soules, and the interest wee have in God thereby. *The Lord is my portion, saith my soul*: but God said so to it first. If instinct of nature teaches *dammes* to know their young ones, and their *young ones* them, in the midst of those that are alike; shall not the Spirit of God much more teach the soule to know its *owne* father? As none knowes what is in man, but the *spirit* of man, so none knowes what love God beares to those that are *his*, but the Spirit of God in *his*: All the light in the world cannot discover the Sunne unto

us,

us, onely it discovers it selfe by its owne beames. So all the Angells and Saints in heaven cannot discover to our soules the love that is in the breast of God towards us, but onely the Spirit of God, which *sheds it into our hearts*. The Spirit onely teaches this language, to say *My God*, It is infused onely into sanctified hearts; and therefore oft-times *meane men* enjoy it, when *great, wise and learned persons* are strangers to it.

Cap. 31.

Rom. 3. 5.

Mat. 11. 25

5. The Spirit when it witnesseth this to us, is called the *Spirit of Adoption*, and hath alwaies accompanying of it a spirit of *supplication*, whereby with a familiar, yet reverend boldnesse, wee lay open our hearts to God as to a deare Father; All others are strangers to this heavenly intercourse. In straits they runne to their friends and carnall shifts, whereas an heire of heaven runs to his Father, and tells him of all.

5.

6. Those that are Gods, are knowne to be his by speciall love-tokens that hee bestowes upon them. As 1. the speciall graces of his Spirit. Princes children are knowne by their costly jewels, and

6.

Speciall favours shew God to be our God.

I.

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and rich ornaments. It is not common *gifts*, and glorious *parts* that set a character upon us to be Gods; but grace to use those gifts, in humility and love, to the glory of the giver.

2.

2. There is in them a *subtlenesse* and *connaturalnesse* of heart to all that is spirituall, to whatsoever hath Gods stampe upon it, as his *truth* and his *children*, and that because they are *his*. By this likenesse of disposition, wee are fashioned to a communion with him: Can two walke together and not be agreed? It is a certaine evidence that we are Gods in Christ, if the Spirit of God hath wrought in us any impression like unto Christ, who is the *image* of his Father; both Christs looking upon *us*, and our looking upon Christ by faith (as *ours*) hath a transforming and conforming power.

3.

3. Spirituall comforts in distresse, such as the world can neither give, nor take away, shew that God looks upon the soules of his with another eye, than he beholdeth others. He sends a *secret* messenger that reports his *peculiar* love
to

to their hearts. He knowes *their soules*, and feeds them with his *hidden Manna*; the inward peace they feele, is not in freedome from trouble, but in freeness with God in the midst of trouble.

Cap. 31.

4. Seasonable and sanctified corrections whereby we are kept from being led away by the error of the wicked, shew Gods fatherly care over us as *his*. Who will trouble himselfe in correcting another mans child? yet we oftner complaine of the smart we feele, than think of the tender heart and hand that smites us, untill our spirits be subdued, and then we reap the quiet fruit of righteousness. Where crosses *worke together for the best*, we may know *that we love God*, and are loved of him. Thriving in a sinfull course, is a black mark of one that is not Gods.

4.

Rom. 8.18

7. Then wee make it appeare that God is our God, when wee side with him, and are for him and his cause in ill times. When God seems to cry out unto us, *Who is on my side, who?* Then if wee can say as those in *Esay*, whereof one sayes, *I am the Lords*, and another calls *himselfe*

7.

2Reg. 9.32

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Esay 44. 6.

Heb. 11. 16

Rev. 18. 4.

himselfe by the name of Jacob, and another subscribes with his hand unto the Lord, its a blessed signe. Thus the Patriarchs, and Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, were not ashamed of God, and God was not ashamed to owne them. Provided that this boldnesse for God proceed not onely from a conviction of the judgement, but from spirituall experience of the goodnesse of the cause whereby wee can justifie in heart what wee justifie in words. Otherwise men may contend for that with others, which they have no interest in themselves. The life must witnesse for God, as well as the tongue: it is oft easier for corrupt nature to part with life rather than with lust.

This siding with God, is with a separation from whatsoever is contrary. God useth this as an argument to come out of Babylon, because we are his people; Come out of her My people. Religion is nothing else, but a gathering and a binding of the soule close to God: that fire which gathers together the gold, separates the drosse. Nature drawes out that

that which is wholesome in meates, and severs the contrary. The good that is to be had by God, is by cleaving to him, and him *onely*. God loves an ingenuous and full protestation, if called to it. It shewes the coldnesse of the times when there is not heat enough of zeale to separate from a contrary faith. God is a jealous God, and so wee shall finde him at last. When the day of severing comes, then they that have stood for him, shall not onely be *his*, but his *treasure*, and his *jewels*.

Mal. 3. 17.

There is none of us all, but may some time or other fall into such a great extremity, that when wee looke about us, wee shall finde none to helpe us: at which time wee shall thoroughly know, what it is to have comfort from heaven, and a God to goe unto. If there be any thing in the world worth labouring for, it is the getting sound evidence to our soules that God is *ours*. What madnesse is it to spend all our labour, to possesse our selves of the *Cisterne*, when the *fountaine* is offered to us? O beloved, the whole world cannot

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not weigh against this *one comfort*, that God is ours. All things laid in the other ballance, would be too light. A *Mouth* may corrupt, a *theefe* may take away that we have here, but who can take our God away? Though God doth convey some comfort to us by these things, yet when they are gone he reserves the comfort in himself still, and can convey *that*, and more in a purer and sweeter way, where hee plants the grace of *faith* to fetch it from him. Why then should we weaken our interest in God, for any thing this earth affords? What unworthy wretches are those, that to please a sinfull man, or to feed a base lust, or to yeeld to a wicked custome, will (as much as in them lyeth) lose their interest in God? Such little consider what an excellent privilege it is to have a *sure refuge* to flye unto in time of trouble. GOD wants not wayes to maintaine *his*, without being beholding to the devill. He hath all help hid in himselfe, and will then most shew it, when it shall make most for his own glory. If God be *ours*, it is a shame

shame to bee beholding to the Devill, that ever it should bee said, *Sathan* by base courses hath made us rich. God thinkes any outward thing too meane for his children, severed from himselfe, therefore he gives his *Son* the expresse *Image of himselfe* unto them. For which cause *David* when he had even studied to reckon up the number of Gods choise blessings, concludes with advancing of *this* above all, *yea rather happy are they whose God is the Lord.* If this will not satisfie the soule, what can? Labour therefore to bring thy soule to this point with God, *Lord, if thou seest it fit, take away all from mee, so thou leaveest me thy selfe: Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire in comparison of thee.*

PC 144.31

Ps 73.35

LI CAP.

Cap. 32.

We ought
to branch
out the se-
verall ex-
cellencies
in God for
our speciall
uses.

Phil. 4. 19.

CAP. XXXII.

*Of improving our evidences for comfort
in severall passages of our lives.*

THAT wee lose not any measure of
comfort in this so sweet a privi-
ledge, we must labour for skill to im-
prove, & implead the same in the seve-
rall passages and occasions of our lives,
and let it appeare in the retaile, that
whatsoever is in God is *mine*: If I am
in a perplexed condition, his *wisdom* is
mine: If *in great danger*, his *power* is
mine; If I lie *tighing under the burthen of
sinne*, his *grace* is mine: If in any
want, his *al-sufficiency* is mine. *My
God* (saith S. Paul) *will supply all your
wants*. If in any danger, *I am thine, Lord*,
save mee, *I am thine*, the price of thy
Sonnes bloud, let me not be lost, thou
hast given me the *earnest* of thy Spirit,
and set thy seale upon me for thy own,
let me neither lose my bargaine, nor
thou thine. What is Religion it selfe
but a spirituall *bond*? whereby the
soule is tyed to God as its owne, and
then

then singles out of God whatsoever is needfull for any occasion: and so binds God with his owne covenant and promise. *Lord thou hast made thy selfe to be mine, therefore now shew thy selfe so, and be exalted in thy wisdom, goodnesse, and power, for my defence. To walke comfortably in my Christian course, I need much grace, supply me out of thy rich store. I need wisdom to goe in and out inoffensively before others, furnish me with thy spirit. I need patience and comfort, thou that art the God of all consolation, bestow it on me.*

In time of desertion put Christ betwixt God and thy soule, and learne to appeale from God *out* of Christ, to God *in* Christ. Lord looke upon my Saviour, that is neare unto thee as thy Sonne, neare to mee as my Brother, and now intercedes at thy right hand for mee; though I have sinned, yet he hath suffered, and shed his precious blood to make my peace. When we are in any trouble, let us still wait on him, and lye at his feet, and never let him goe, till he cast a gracious look upon us.

So, if wee be to deale with God, for

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Pl. 111. 6.

Ioha 17.

the *Church* abroad, we may allége unto him, that whatsoever provocations are therein, and deformity in regard of abuses and scandalls: yet it is his *Church*, his people, his inheritance, his Name is called upon in it, and the enemies of it are his enemies. GOD hath engaged himselfe to the friends of the *Church*, that they shall prosper that love it, and therefore we may with a holy boldnesse presse him, for a blessing upon the same.

So for our *Children* and posterity, we may encline God to respect them, because they are under his Covenant, who hath promised to bee our God, and the God of our Seed: Thine they were, thou gavest them mee: all that I have is thine, these are those children, which thou of thy rich grace hast given me. They are thine, more than mine. I am but a meanes under thee, to bring them into the world, and to be a Nurse unto thy children; Take care therefore of thine owne children, I beseech thee, (especially) when I can take no care of them my selfe, thou slumbrest not, thou dyest not, I must.

Flesh

Flesh and *blood* thinke nothing is cared for, but what it seeth cared for by it selfe. It hath noeyes to see a guard of *Providence*, a guard of *Angels*. It takes no knowledge that that is best cared for, that God cares for. Those that have God for *their God*, have enlarged hearts as they have enlarged comforts. They have an everlasting spring that supplies them in all wants, refreshes them in all troubles, and then runnes most clearly and freshly, when all other streames in the world are dried and stopt up. Were wee skilfull in the *art of faith*, to improve so great an interest, what in the world could much dismay us? *Faith* will set God against all.

It should fill our hearts with an holy indignation against our selves, if either we rest in a condition, wherein we cannot truely say, *God is [Our God]* or (if when we can in some sincerity of heart say *this*) that we make no better advantage thereby, and maintaine not our selves answerable to such a condition. What a shame is it for a Noble-mans

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sonne to live like a begger? for a great rich man to live like a poore peasant? to famish at a banquet? to fall when we have so many stayes to lay hold on? Whereas if we could make this cleare to our soules, that *God is ours*, and then take up our thoughts with the great riches wee have in *him*, laid open in Christ, and in the promises, wee need trouble our selves about nothing, but onely get a large vessell of *faith*, to receive what is offered, nay enforced upon us.

When we can say, *God is our God*, it is more than if we could say, Heaven is mine; or whatever good the creature affords, is mine. Alas, what is all this, to be able to say, *God is mine*, who hath in him the sweetnesse of all these things, and infinite more? If God be *ours*, goodnesse it selfe is *ours*. If hee be not *ours*, though we had all things else, yet ere long nothing would be *ours*. What a wondrous comfort is this, that God hath put himselfe over to be *ours*? That a beleeving soule may say with as great confidence (and greater too) that *God*

is

is his, than he can say his house is his, his treasure is his, his friends are his? Nothing is so much *ours*, as God is *ours*, because by his being *ours* in *covenant*, all other things become *ours*: And if God be once *ours*, well may we *trust* in him. *God* and *ours* joyned together, make up the full comfort of a Christian. [*God*] there is all to be had; but what is that to *me*, unlesse he be *my God*? *Al-sufficiency with propriety, fully stayeth the soule.*

David was now banished from the Sanctuary, from his friends, habitation, and former comforts; but was he banished from his God? No, God was *his* God still. When *riches*, and *friends*, and *life* it selfe cease to be *ours*, yet God never loseth *his* right in us, nor we our interest in him. This comfort that *God* is *ours*, reacheth unto the *resurrection* of *our bodies*, and *a life everlasting*. God is the God of *Abraham*, (and so of every true beleever) even when his body is turned into dust. Hence it is that *the loving kindnesse of the Lord is better than life*, because when *life* departs, yet wee

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live for ever in *him*. When *Moses* saw the people drop away so fast in the *wildernesse*, and wither like grasse, *Thou art our foundation* (saith he) *from one generation to another : thou art God from everlasting to everlasting*. When we leave the world, and are no more scene here, yet we have a dwelling place in GOD for ever. God is ours from everlasting in *election*, and to everlasting in *glory*, protecting us here, and glorifying us hereafter. *David* that claimed God to be *his God*, is gone, but *Dauids God* is alive. And *David* himselfe (*though his flesh see corruption*, yet) is alive in his God still.

That which is said of wily persons that are full of fetches and windings, and turnings in the world, that such will never breake, may much more truly bee said of a right godly man, that hath but one grand policy, to secure him in all dangers, which is to runne to his God, as to his tower of offence and defence : such a one will never be at a desperate losse so long as God hath any credit, because hee never faileth those
that

that flie unto him, and that because his mercy and truth never failes. The very *lame* and the *blinde*, the most shiftlesse creatures, when they had gotten the *strong hold of Sion*, thought then they might securely *scorne David* and *his host*, because though they were weake in themselves, yet their *hold* was strong; but wee see their hold failed them at length, which a Christians will never doe.

Cap. 32.

2 Sam. 5.
6:7.

But God seemes to have small care of those that are his in the world, those who beleewe themselves to be his jewels, are counted the off-scouring of the world, and most despised.

Object.

We must know that such have a glorious life in God, but it is *hidden with Christ in God*, from the eyes of the world, and sometimes from their *owne*; here they are hidden under infirmities, afflictions, and disgraces, but yet never so hidden, but that God sometimes lets downe a beame of comfort and strength, which they would not lose to be freed from their present condition, though never so grievous. God comes

Ans.
Coloss. 3.

Cap. 32.

Gen. 21. 19

comes more immediatly to them now, than formerly he was used ; nay, even when God seemes to forsake them (and to be their enemy) yet they are supported with such inward strength, that they are able to make good their claim with Christ their head, and cry *My God still* ; God never so departs, but he alwayes leaves somewhat behind him, which drawes and keepes the heart to him. Wee are like poore *Hagar*, who when the *bottle of water* was spent, *fell a crying*, when there was a fountaine close by, but her teares hindered her from seeing it ; when things goe ill with us in our trades and callings, and all is spent, *then* our spirits droope, and wee are at our wits end, as if God were not where he was. Oh consider, if we had all and had not God, we had nothing : If we have nothing, and have God, we have enough, for we have him that hath all, and more than all at his command. If wee had all other comforts that our hearts can desire, yet if God withdraw himselfe, what remains but a curse and emptinesse ? What makes
heaven

heaven but the presence of God? And what makes *hell* but the absence of God? Let God be in any condition, though never so ill, yet it is comfortable, and usually we finde more of God *in* trouble, than when wee are *out* of trouble; the comforts of Religion never come till other faile. Cordialls are kept for faintings. When a curtaine and a vaile is drawne betwixt us and the creature, then our eyes are onely upward to God, and hee is more clearely seene of us.

In the division of things, God bequeaths himselfe to those that are *his*, for their portion, as the best portion he can give them. There are many goodly things in the world, but none of these are a Christians portion, there is in him to supply all good, and remove all ill, untill the time come that wee stand in need of no other good. It is our chiefe *wisdom* to know him, our *holinesse* to love him, our *happinesse* to enjoy him. There is in him to be had, whatsoever can truely make us happy. Wee goe to our *treasure*, and our *portion* in all our wants,

God, the
Saints
portion.

Cap. 32.

Pl. 73. 26.

wants, we live by it, & value our selves by it. God is such a portion, that the more wee spend on him, the more wee may. *Our strength may faile, & our heart may faile, but God is our portion for ever.* Everything else teaches us by the vanity and vexation wee finde in them, that our happinesse is not in them, they send us to God; they may make us worse, but better they cannot. Our nature is above them, and ordained for a greater good; they can goe but along with us for a while, and their end swallowes up all the comfort of their beginning, as *Pharaohs* leane Kine swallowed up the fat. If wee have no better portion here, than these things, wee are like to have hell for our portion hereafter. What a shame will it be hereafter when we are stript of all, that it should be said, Loe this is the man that tooke not God for his portion. If God bee once ours, he goes for ever along with us; and when earth will hold us no longer, heaven shall. Who that hath his senses about him, would perish for want of water, when there is a fountaine by him?

Cap. 38.

him? or for hunger that is at a feast? God alone is a rich portion: O then let us labour for a large *faith*, as we have a large *object*; If we had a thousand times more faith, wee should have a thousand times more increase of Gods blessings. When the Prophet came to the *widowes house*, as many vessels as shee had were filled with oyle; wee are straitned in our owne faith, but not straitned in our God. It falls out oft in this world, that Gods people are like *Israel* at the red sea, invironed with dangers on all sides: What course have we then to take, but onely to looke up and wait for the salvation of our God? This is a *breast full of consolation*, let us teach our hearts to suck and draw comfort from hence.

1 Reg 17.
14.

Is God *our God*; and will he suffer any thing to befall us for our hurt? Will he lay any more upon us, than he gives us strength to beare? Will hee suffer any winde to blow upon us, but for good? doth he not set us before his face? Will a Father or Mother suffer a childe to be wronged in their presence, if they can help

Cap. 31.

help it? Will a friend suffer his friend to be injured, if he may redresse him? And will God that hath put these affections into Parents and friends, neglect the care of those he hath taken so neere unto himselfe? No surely, his eyes are open to looke upon their condition, his eares are open to their prayers; a booke of remembrance is written of all their good desires, speeches, and actions; hee hath bottles for all their tears, their very sighs are not hid from him; he hath written them upon the palmes of his hands, and cannot but continually looke upon them. Oh let us prize the favour of so good a God, who though he dwels on high, yet will regard things so low, and not neglect the meane estate of any; Nay, especially, delights to be called the comforter of his Elect, and the God of those that are in misery, and have none to flye unto but himselfe.

Mal. 3. 16.

Isay 46. 16

But wee must know that God onely thus graciously visits his owne children; he visits with his choicest favours those onely that feare his Name. As for those that either secretly undermine, or openly

Cap. 38.

openly oppose the cause, and Church of God, and joyne with his enemies; such as favour not the things of God, but commit spiritnall Idolatry, and Adultery with Gods enemies, *the world*, and the *devill*; God will answer these, as once he did the *Israelites*, (when in their necessity they would have forced acquaintance upon him) *Goe to the gods whom you have served*, to the great men whose persons you have obeyed for advantage: to your *riches*, to your *pleasure*, which you have loved more than God or goodnesse: you would not lose a base *custome*, an *oath*, a *superfluity*, a thing of nothing for me, therefore I will not owne you now. Such men are more impudent than the *devill* himself, that will claime acquaintance with God at last, when they have carryed themselves as his enemies all their dayes. *Sathan* could tell *Paul* and *Silas*, they were *the servants of the living God*, but he would not make that plea for himselfe, knowing that *he* was a cursed creature. *you shall know what you have done*. Miserable then is their condition who

Iudg. 10.
14.

Act. 16. 17

Cap. 31.

who live in the world, (nay in the Church) without God. Such are in a worse estate than *Pagans* and *Jewes*; for living in the house of God, they are *strangers* from God, and from the covenant of grace; usurping the name of Christians, having indeed nothing to doe with Christ.

Some of these like spirituall vagabonds, as *Cain*, excommunicate themselves from Gods presence in the use of the *meanes*; or rather like *Devils*, that will have nothing to doe with God, because they are loath to be tormented before their time; they thinke every good Sermon, an arraignment of them, and therefore keep out of reach.

Others will present themselves under the *meanes*, and carry some savour away with them of what they heare, but it is onely till they meet with the next temptation, unto which they yeeld themselves presently slaves. These shrowd themselves under a generall profession, as they did, who called themselves *Jewes*, and were nothing lesse. But alas, an empty title, will bring

bring an empty comfort at last. It was cold comfort to the *rich man* in flames; that *Abraham* called him *sonne*; or to *Judas*, that *Christ* called him *friend*; or to the rebellious Jewes, that *God* styles them *his people*. Such as our profession is, such will our comfort be. True profession of Religion is another thing than most men take it to bee; it is made up of the outward duty, and the *inward man* too; which is indeed the life and soule of all. What the heart doth not in Religion, is not done.

God cares for no retainers, that will onely weare his *Livery*, but serve themselves. *What hast thou to doe to take his Name into thy mouth, and hatest to bee reformed? Saul* lived in the bosome of the Church, yet (being a cruell Tyrant) when he was in a desperate plunge, his outward *profession* did him no good: and therefore when he was environed with his enemies, hee uttered this dolefull complaint, *God hath forsaken mee, and the Philistines are upon me*: A pittifull case; yet so will it be with all those that *rest* in an outward profession, think-

M m

ing

Cap. 31.
Luke 16.

*Quid cor
non facit,
non fit.*

P^a. 30.

1 Sam. 28.
15.

Cap. 32.

2 Sam. 14-
12.

2 Sam. 7.5

Exod. 32.7

ing it enough to complement with God, when their hearts are not right within them. Such will at length bee forced to cry, *Sicknesse* is upon mee, *death* is upon me, *hell* is before mee, and God hath forsaken me. I would none of God heretofore, *Now* God will have none of me. When *David* himselfe had offended God by *numbring the people*, then God counted him but plaine *David*, *Goe and say to David, &c.* whereas before when hee purposed to build a *Temple*, then *goe tell my servant David*. When the *Israelites* had set up an *Idol*, then God fathers them on *Moses*, *T H Y people which thou hast brought out of E-gypt*; hee would not owne them as at other times, then; *They are M Y people* still whilest they keepe covenant. No care, no present comfort in this neare *relation*.

The price of the *Pearle* is not known till all else be sold, and wee see the necessary use of it. So the worth of God in Christ is never discerned, till we see our lost and undone condition without him, till conscience flies in our faces, and

and dragges us to the brink of hell; then if ever we taste *how good the Lord is*, wee will say, *Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord*: Heretofore I have heard of his loving-kindnesse, but that is not a thousand part of what I see and feele. The joy I now apprehend, is untutterable, *unconceivable*.

Oh then when wee have gotten our soules possesse of God, let our study be, to preserve our selves in his love, to walke close with him, that he may delight to abide with us, and never forsake us. How basely doth the Scripture speake of whatsoever stands in our way? it makes nothing of them. What is *man* but *vanitie*, and *lesse than vanity*? *All Nations* but as a *drop of the Bucket*, as the *dust of a ballance*; things not at all considerable. *Flesh* lookes upon them as through a multiplying glasse, making them greater than they are; but *faith* (as God doth) sees them as nothing.

This is such a blessed condition, as may well challenge all our diligence in labouring to be assured of it; neither is it to bee attained or maintained with-

Is. 40. 15.

What preserves the sense of Gods favour.

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out the strength and prime of our care. I speake especially of, and in regard of the sense and comfort of it. For, the sense of Gods favour will not be kept, without keeping him in our best affections above all things in the world, without keeping of our hearts alwayes close and neare to him, which cannot bee without keeping a most narrow watch over our loose and unsetled hearts, that are ready to stray from God, and fall to the creature. It cannot be kept without exact and circumspect walking, without constant self denyall, without a continuall preparation of spirit, to want and forsake any thing that God seeth fit to take from us.

Our pains
cannot be
spent to
better pur-
pose, than
in crossing
of our
selves for
God.

But what of all this? Can wee crosse our selves, or spend our labours to better purpose? one sweet beame of Gods countenance will requite all this. Wee beate not the ayre, wee plow not in the sand, neither sow in a barren soyle, God is no barren wildernesse. Nay, hee never shewes so much of *himselfe*, as in suffering, and parting with any thing for him, and denying our selves of *that*, which

which wee thinke stands not with his will. Great persons require great observance. Wee can deny our selves, and have mens persons in great admiration, for hope of some advantage; and is any more willing and more able to advance us than the great All-sufficient God? A Christian indeed, undergoes more troubles, takes more paines (especially with his owne heart) than others doe. But what are these to his gaines? What returne so rich, as trading with God? What comforts so great, as those that are fetched from the fountaine? One day spent in enjoying the light of Gods countenance, is sweeter than a thousand without it. Wee see here, when *David* was not onely shut out from all comforts, but lay under many grievances, what a fruitfull use hee makes of this, that God was his God. It upholdeth his dejected, it distilleth his unquiet soule: it leadeth him to *the rock that was higher than he*, and there stayeth him. It filleth him with comfortable hopes of better times to come. It sets him above himselfe, and all troubles and feares whatsoever. M m 3 There-

Cap. 32.

Pa. 51.

Therefore waite still in the use of *meanes*, till God shine upon thee; yea, though wee know our sinnes in Christ are pardoned, yet there is something more that a gracious heart waits for, that is, a good looke from God, a further enlargement of heart, and an *establishing* in grace. It was not enough for *David* to have his sinnes pardoned, but to *recover the joy of salvation*, and *freedom of spirit*. Therefore the soul should alwayes be in a waiting condition, even untill it bee filled with the fulnesse of God, as much as it is capable of. Neither is it quiet alone, or comfort alone, that the soule longs after, no, nor the favour of God *alone*, but a gracious heart to walke worthy of God. It rests not whilest any thing remaines, that may breed the least strangenesse betwixt God and us.

CAP.

CAP. XXXIII.

Of experience, and faith, and how to wait
on God comfortably. Helps thereto.

[My God.]

THESE words further imply a speciall
experience, that *Dauids* soule had
felt of the goodnesse of God; hee had
found God distilling the comfort of
his goodnesse and truth through the
promises, and he knew he should finde
God againe the same he was, if hee put
him in minde of his former gracious
dealing. His soule *knew right well*, how
good God was, and he could scale to those
truths he had found comfort by, there-
fore hee thus speakes to his soule, *My*
soule, what *my soule*, that hast found God
so good, so oft, so many wayes, thou
My soule to bee discouraged, having
God, and *My God*, with whom I have
taken so much sweet counsell, and felt
so much comfort from, and found al-
wayes heretofore to sticke so close un-
to me? Why shouldst thou *now* be in

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such a case, as if GOD and thou had beene strangers one to another. If we could treasure up experiments, the former part of our life would come in to helpe the latter, and the longer we live, the richer in *faith* we should be. Even as in victories, every former overthrow of an enemy, helps to obtaine a succeeding victory. The use of a sanctified memory, is to lose nothing that may helpe in time of need. He had need be a well tryed, and a knowne friend, upon whom wee lay all our salvation and comfort.

God to be
trusted,
though ne-
ver tryed.

We ought to trust God upon *other* grounds, though wee had never tryed him: but when hee helps our *faith* by former *experience*, this should strengthen our confidence, and shore up our spirits, and put us on to goe more cheerefully to God, as to a tried friend. If we were well read in the story of our owne lives, we might have a *divinity* of our owne, drawne out of the observation of Gods particular dealing towards us; we might say *this & this truth* I dare venture upon, I have found it true,

true, I dare build all my happinesse upon it. As *Paul*, I know whom I have trusted; I have tryed him, he never yet failed me; I am not now to learne how faithfull he is to those that are *his*. Every new experience is a new knowledge of God, and should fit us for new encounters. If we have beene good in former times, God remembers the *kindnesse* of our youth; wee should therefore remember the *kindnesse* of God even from our youth. Evidence of what we have felt, helps our faith in that, which for the present we feele not.

1cr. 2. 2.

Though it be one thing to live by *faith*, and another thing to live by *sight*, yet the more wee see, and feele, and taste of God, the more we shall be led to relye on him, for that which as yet we neither see nor feele: Because thou hast beene my helper (saith *David*) therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I exjoyce. The time was Lord, when thou shewdst thy selfe a gracious Father to me, and thou art unchangeable in thy nature, in thy love, and in thy gifts.

Ps. 63. 7.

Yea, when there is no present evidence,

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evidence; but God shewes himselfe as contrary to us, yet a former taste of Gods goodnesse will enable to lay claime unto him still. Gods concealing of himselfe, is but a wise discipline for a time, untill wee bee enabled to beare the full revealing of himselfe unto us for ever. In the meane time though we have some sight and feeling of God, yet our constant living is not by it: the evidence of that we see not, is that which more constantly upholds the soule, than the evidence of any thing we see or feele.

Yea, though our experience by reason of our not minding of it in trouble, seemes many times to stand us in no stead, but we fare as if God had never looked in mercy upon us: Yet (even here) some vertue remaines of former sense, which with the present spirit of faith, helps us to looke upon God, as *ours*; as wee have a present strength from food received, and digested before: vessels are something the better for that liquor they keepe not, but runs through them.

But

But if experience should wholly faile, there is such a divine power in faith, as a very little beame of it, having no other help than a naked *promise*, will uphold a soule; howsoever wee must neglect no helpe, for God oft suspends his comfort, till we have searched all our helps. Though wee see *no light*, yet we ought to search all crevices for light, and rejoyce in the least beame of light, that wee may see day by. It is the nature of true *faith*, to search and pry into every corner; and if after all, nothing appeares, then it casts it selfe upon God, as in the first conversion, when it had nothing to looke upon, but the offer of *free mercy*. If at that time without former experience, wee did *trust God*, Why not now, when we have forgotten our experience? The chiefe grounds of trusting God, are alwayes the same, whether we feele, or feele not; nay, though for the present wee feele the contrary, *faith* will never leave wrastring, till it hath gotten a blessing. When *faith* is driven to worke *alone*, having nothing but God, and his bare promise

Cap. 33.
Faith alone
a sufficient
support.

ad T
in quibus
aliquid est
Sicut et

.i.

Cum omni-
um iniquitas
sit excusata,
ad ea acco-
dimus de
quibus bene
sperandum
esse credi-
mus. Sen.

Cap. 33.

The conformity
of the soule
to Christ.

1.

2.

3.

4.

promise to relie upon, then God thinks it lies upon his credit to shew himselfe as a God unto us. Gods power in creating light out of darkness, is never more exalted, than when a guilty soule is lifted up by God to looke for mercy, even when he seemes armed with justice, to execute vengeance upon him; then the soule is brought to a neare conformity unto Christ, who, 1. when hee had the guilt of the sins of the whole world upon him; 2. when he was forsaken; and that after hee had enjoyed the sweetest communion with his Father that ever creature could doe; and not only so, but 3. felt the weight of Gods just displeasure against sin; and 4. was abased lower than ever any creature was: yet still hee held fast God, as his God.

In earthly matters, if we have a Title to any thing by gift, contract, inheritance, or howsoever, wee will not bee wrangled out of our right. And shall we not maintaine our right in God, against all the tricks and cavils of Sathan, and our own hearts? We must labor to have something, that we may shew that wee are

are within the covenant. If we be never so little entred into the covenant, we are safe. And herein lies the special comfort of sincerity, that though our grace be little, yet it is of the right stampe, and shews us, that we are servants, and sons, though unworthy to be so. Here a little truth will goe farre. Hence it is that the Saints in al their extremities, still asseage something that shewes that they are within the covenant, *We are thy childre, thy people, and thy servants, &c.* God is mindfull of his covenant, but is well pleased, that we should minde him of it too, & mind it our selves to make use of it, as *David* doth here. He knew if hee could bring his soule to his God, all would be quiet. God is so ready to mercy, that he delighteth in it, & delighteth in Christ, through whō he may shew mercy notwithstanding his justice, as being fully satisfyed in Christ. *Mercy is his name* that he will be known by. It is his glory which we behold in the face of Christ, who is nothing but grace and mercy it selfe. Nay, he pleads reasons for mercy, even from the finfulness and misery
of

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of his creature, and maintaines his *owne* mercy against all the wrangling cavils of flesh and blood, that would put mercy from them; and hearken more willingly to *Sathans* objections, than *Gods* arguments, till at length God subdues their spirits so farre, as they become ashamed for standing out so long against him: How ready will God be to shew mercy to us when we *seeke it*, that thus presseth upon us, when wee seeme to refuse it? If God should take advantage of our waywardnesse, what would become of us? *Sathans* course is to discourage those that God would have encouraged, and to encourage those whom God never speakes peace unto, and hee thinkes to gaine both wayes. Our care therefore should be, when we resolve upon Gods wayes, to labour that no discouragement fasten upon us, seeing G O D and his Word speake all comfort to us.

And because the best of a Christian is to come, wee should raise up our spirits to *waite* upon God, for that mercy which is yet to come. All inferiour waitings

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waitings for good things *here*, doe but traine us up in the comfortable expectation of the maine. *not here but, elsewhere*

Waiting
difficult.

This *waiting* on God requires a great strength of grace; by reason not onely

1.

1. of the excellency of the things waited for, (which are farre beyond any thing wee can hope for in the world.)

2.

But 2. in regard of the *long day* which God takes before hee performeth his

3.

promise, and 3. from thence the tediousnesse of delay. 4. The many troubles of life in our way. 5. The great

4.

opposition wee meet with in the world, 6. and *scandals* oft-times, even from

5.

them that are in great esteeme for Religion; 7. together with the untowardnesse of our nature, in being ready to be

6.

put off by the least discouragement. In these respects there must bee more than

7.

a humane spirit to hold up the soule, and carry it along to the end of that

which we waite for.

But if God bee *our* God, that love which engaged him to binde *himselfe*

to us in pretious promises; will furnish *us* likewise with grace needfull, till we

be

Cap. 39. be possessed of them. He will give us leave to depend upon him; both for happinesse, and all sanctifying and quieting graces; which may support the soule; till it come to its perfect rest in God. For God so quiets the hearts of his children, as withall, he makes them better, and fitter for *that* which he provides for them: *grace* and *peace* go together; *Our God* is the God of *grace* and *peace*, of such graces as breed peace.

1. As he is a God of *love*, nay love it selfe to us; so a taste of *his love*, raising up *our love*; is better than *wine*, full of nothing but encouragement; it will fetch up a soule from the deepest discouragement; this grace quickeneth all other graces, it hath so much spirits in it, as will sweeten all conditions. *Love* inables to waite, as *Jacob* for *Leah* seven years. Nothing is hard to *love*, it carries all the powers of the soule with it.

Gen. 39.

2. As he is a God of *hope*, so by this grace, as an *anchor* fastened in heaven within the vaile, hee stayeth the soule; that though as a Ship at Anchor, it may be tossed and moved, yet not removed from

from its station. This *hope* as corke, will keep the soule (though in some heaviness) from sinking, and as an *Helmet* beare off the blows that they endanger not our life.

Op. 33.

Ephes. 6.

3. As God is a God of *hope*, so by hope of *patience*, which is a grace whereby the soul resigneth up it selfe to God in humble submission to his will, because he is *our God*, as *David* in extremity comforted himselfe in the Lord his God. Patience breeds comfort, because it brings experience with it of Gods owning of us to be *His*. The soule *shod* and fenced with *this*, is prepared against all rubs and thornes in our way, so as wee are kept from taking offence. All troubles we suffer, doe but help *patience* to its perfect worke, by subduing the unbroken sturdinesse of our spirits, when wee feelee by experience, wee get but more blowes, by standing out against God.

3.

Ephes. 6.

Rom. 5. 3.

4. The Spirit of God (likewise) is a spirit of *meeknesse*, whereby though the soule be sensible of evill, yet it moderates such distempers, as would otherwise

4.

N n

wife

Cap. 33.

Zeph. 2. 3.

Psal. 73. 6.

Mat. 5. 5.

5.

wise rob a man of himselfe, and together with *patience* keepeth the soule in possession of it selfe. It stayes murmurings and frettings against God or man. It sets and keeps the soule in tune. It is that which God (as he workes, so he) much *delights in*, and *sets a price upon it*, as the chiefe ornament of the soul. The *meek of the earth seek God, and are hid in the day of his wrath*; whereas high spirits that compasse themselves with pride as with a *chaine*, thinking to set out themselves by *that* which is their *shame*, are looked upon by God *a farre off*. Meek persons will bow, when others break; they are raised when others are pluckt downe, and stand when others that mount upon the wings of vanity fall; these prevaile by yeelding, and are Lords of themselves, and other things else, more than other unquiet spirited men: the blessings of *heaven and earth* attend on these.

5. So likewise contentednesse with our estate is needfull for a waiting condition, and this we have in *Our God* being able to give the soule full satisfacti-

on.

on. For outward things God knowes how to dyet us. If our condition be not to our minde, he will bring our mind to our condition. If the spirit be too bigge for the condition, it is never quiet, therefore God will leuell both. Those wants be well supplied that are made up with contentednesse, and with riches of a higher kinde. If the Lord be our *Shepherd*, we can want nothing. This lifteth the *weary hands, and feeble knees*, even under *chastisement*, wherein though the soule mourneth in the sense of Gods displeasure, yet it rejoyceth in his Fatherly care.

Psal 23.

Heb 12. 11

6. But *patience* and *contentment* are too low a condition for the soule to rest in, therefore the Spirit of God raiseth it up to a spirituall enlargement of joy. So much joy, so much light, and so much light, so much scattering of *darknesse of spirit*. We see in nature how a little light will prevaile over the thickest clouds of darknesse, a little fire wastes a great deale of drosse. The knowledge of God to be *our God*, brings such a light of joy into the soule, as driveth out dark un-

6.

Cap. 33.

comfortable conceits; this light makes lightsome. If the light of *knowledge* alone makes bold, much more the light of *joy* arising from our communion and interest in God. How can wee enjoy God, and not joy in him? A soule truly cheerefull rejoyceth that God whom it loveth, should think it worthy to endure any thing for him. This *joy* often ariseth to a spirit of *glory*, even in matter of outward abasement; if the trouble accompanied with disgrace continue, *the spirit of Glory rests upon us*, and it will rest so long, until it make us more than Conquerors, even then when we seeme conquered: for not onely the *cause*, but the *spirit* riseth higher, the more the enemies labour to keep it under, as we see in *Stephen*.

Acs 7.

With this *joy* goeth a spirit of *courage* and *confidence*. What can daunt that soule, which in the greatest troubles hath made the great God to be its owne? Such a spirit dares bid defiance to all opposite power, setting the soule above the world, having a spirit larger and higher than the world, and seeing
all

all (but God) beneath it, as being in heaven already in its *head*. After *Moses* and *Micah* had scene God in his favour to them, how little did they regard the angry countenances of those mighty Princes, that were in their times the terrors of the world? The courage of a Christian is not onely against sensible danger, and of flesh and blood, but against *principalities, and powers of darkness*, against the whole *kingdome* of *Sathan*, the god of the world, whom hee knowes *shortly* shall be trodden under his feet. *Sathan* and his may for a time exercise us, but they cannot hurt us. True beleevvers are so many *Kings & Queens*, so many Conquerours over that which others are slaves to: *they* can overcome themselves in *revenge*, they can despise those things that the world admires, and see an excellency in *that* which the *world* sets light by, *they* can set upon spirituall duties, which the *world* cannot tell how to goe about, and endure that which others tremble to think of, and that upon wise reasons, and a sound foundation, they can put off them-

N n 3 selves

Rom. 16.
20.

Cap. 33.

Tertul.
Apolog.

selves, and be content to be nothing, so their God may appeare the greater, and dare undertake and undergoe any thing for the glory of their God. This courage of Christians among the *Heathens* was counted *obstinacy*, but they knew not the power of the Spirit of Christ *in his*, which is ever strongest, when they are weakest in themselves, *they* knew not the privy armour of prooffe that Christians had about their hearts, and thereupon counted their courage to be obstinacy.

A&. 20. 24

Some think the Martyrs were too prodigall of their bloud, and that they might have been better adyised; but such are unacquainted with the force of the love of God kindled in the heart of his childe, which makes him set such a high price upon Christ and his truth, that he counts not *his life dear unto him*; Hee knowes he is *not his owne*, but hath given up himselfe to Christ, and therefore all that is *his*, yea if hee had more lives to give for Christ, hee should have them. He knowes he shall be no loser by it. Hee knowes it is not a losse

losse of his life; but an exchange for a better.

We see the creatures that are under us, will be courageous in the eye of their Masters; that are of a *superiour* nature above them; and shall not a Christian be courageous in the presence of his great Lord and Master, who is present with him, about him, and in him? undoubtedly he that hath seen God once in the face of Christ, dares looke the grimmeest creature in the face, yea death it selfe under any shape. The feare of all things flies before such a soule. Onely a Christian is not ashamed of his confidence. Why should not a Christian be as bold for his God, as others are for the base gods they make to themselves?

7. Besides a spirit of *courage* (for establishing the soule) is required a spirit of *constancie*, whereby the soule is steeled and preserved immoveable in all conditions, whether present or to come, and is not changed in changes. And why? but because the spirit knows that God on whom it rests is unchange-

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Psal. 18.

Rom. 8. 39

able. We our selves are as quick-silver unsettled and moveable, till the spirit of constancie fixe us. We see *David* sets out God in glorious termes, borrowed from all that is strong in the creature, to shew that hee had great reason to be constant, and cleaving to him, *He is my rock, my Buckler, the horn of my salvation, my high Tower, &c.* God is a rock, so deep, that no flouds can undermine, so high, that no waves can reach though they rise never so high, and rage never so much. When wee stand upon this rock that is *higher than we*, we may overlooke all waves, swelling, and foaming, and breaking themselves, but not hurting us. And thereupon may triumphantly conclude with the Apostle, That *neither height, nor depth shall ever separate us from the love of God.* Whatsoever is in the creature he found in his God, and more abundant; the soule cannot with an eye of faith look upon God in Christ, but it will be in its degree as God is *quiet and constant*, the spirit aimeth at such a condition, as it beholdeth in God towards it selfe.

This

This constancy is upheld by endeavouring to keep a constant sight of God, for want of which it oft fares with us, like men, that having a City or Tower in their eye, passing through uneven grounds, hills and dales, sometimes get the sight thereof, sometimes lose it, and sometimes recover it again, though the *Tower* be still where it was, and they neerer to it than they were at first. So it is oft with our uneven spirits; when once wee have a sight of God, upon any present discouragement, wee let fall our spirits, and lose the sight of him, untill by an eye of faith we recover it againe, and see him still to be where he was at first. The cherishing of passions takes away the sight of God, as clouds take away the sight of the Sun, though the Sunne be still where it was, and shineth as much as ever it did. We use to say, when the body of the Moon is betwixt the *Sunne* and us, that the Sunne is eclipsed; when indeed not the *Sunne*, but the earth is darkned; the Sun loseth not one of its glorious beames. God is oft neere us, as he was unto *Jacob*,

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Psa. 73. 27

cob, and we are not aware of it. God was neere the holy man *Asaph*, when hee thought him farre off. *I am continually with thee* (saith he) *thou holdest me by my right hand.* *Mary* in her weeping passion could not see Christ before her, hee seemed a stranger unto her. So long as we can keep our eye upon God, we are above the reach of sin or any spirituall danger.

CAP. XXXIV.

Of confirming this trust in God. Seek it of God himselfe. Sins hinder not: nor Satan. Conclusion and Soliloquie.

BUt to returne to the drawing out of our trust by *waiting*. Our estate in this world is still to wait, and happy it is that we have so great things to wait for; but our comfort is, that we have not onely a *furniture of graces*, one strengthening another as stones in an arch; but likewise God vouchsafeth some drops of the sweetnesse of the things

2 Pet. 1. 5.

Cap. 34.

Psal. 116.

Hab. 4. 2.

Rev. 14.

perfect happinesse, being as without need, so without desire of the least change. When the time of our departure thither comes, then we may say as *David, Enter now my soule into thy rest.* This is the *rest which remaineth for Gods people*, that is worth the waiting for, when wee shall rest from all labour of sin and sorrow, and lay our heads in the bosome of Christ for ever.

It stands us therefore upon to get this great Charter more and more confirmed to us (that God is *our God*) for it is of everlasting use unto us. It first begins at our entring into *covenants* with God, & continues not only unto *death*, but entreth into heaven with us. As it is our heaven upon earth to enjoy God as ours, so it is the very heaven of heaven, that there we shall for ever behold him, and have communion with him.

Degrees of
our propriety in God
Pro. 4. 18.

I.

The degrees of manifesting this propriety in God are divers, rising one upon another, *as the light clears up by litle and litle til it comes to a perfect day.* 1. As the ground of all the rest, wee apprehend

hend God to be a God of some peculiar persons, as *favourites* above others.

2. From hence is stirred up in the soule a restlesse desire, that God would discover himselfe so to it, as he doth to those that are *his*, that hee would *visit our souls* with the salvation of *his chosen*.

3. Hence followes a putting of the soule upon God, an adventuring it selfe on his mercy. 4. Vpon this, God when he seeth fit, discovers by his Spirit that he is *Ours*.

5. Whence followeth a dependance on him as ours, for all things that may carty us on in the way to heaven. 6. Courage and boldnesse in setting our selves against whatsoever may oppose us in the way: As the three young men in *Daniel*, *Our God can deliver us if he will. Our God is in heaven, &c.*

7. After which, springs a sweet spirituall security, whereby the soule is freed from slavish feares, and glorieth in God as *Ours* in all conditions. And this is termed by the *Apostle*, not onely *assurance*, but the *riches of assurance*. Yet this is not so cleare, and full, as it shall be in heaven, because some clouds may

after

Cap. 34

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Dan. 3. So
Pla. 115 3.

7.

Col. 1. 2.

Cap. 34

after arise out of the remainder of corruption, which may something overcast this assurance, untill the light of Gods countenance in heaven for ever seatters all!

There being so great happinesse in this neerenesse betwixt God and us, no wonder if Satan labour to hinder the same, by interposing the guilt and hainousnesse of our *sinnes*, which he knows of themselves will worke a *separation*; But *these* upon our first serious thought of *returning*, will be removed. As they could not hinder our meeting with God, so they may cause a strangenesse for a time, but not a parting: a hiding of Gods countenance, but not a banishing of us from it. *Peter* had *denied Christ*, and the rest of the Apostles had left him all *alone*: Yet our Saviour after his *Resurrection* forgets all former unkindnesse, hee did not so much as object it to them, but sends *Mary*, who herself had been a great sinner, as an Apostle to the *Apostles*, and that *presently*, to tell them that he was *risen*, his care would have no delay. Hee knew they were

Iohn 20.

were in great heavinesse for their unkindnesse. Though he was now entred into the *first degree* of his glory, yet we see his *glory* made him not forget his poore Disciples. Above all he was most carefull of *Peter*, as deeper in sinne than the rest, and therefore deeper in sorow. *Go tell Peter, he needs most comfort.* But what is the message? that *I ascend not to my Father alone, but to your Father, not to my God onely, but to your God.*

And shall not we be bold, to say so after Christ hath taught us, and put this claime into our mouthes? If once we let this hold goe, then Satan hath us where he would, every little crosse then dejects us. Sathan may darken the joy of our salvation, but not take away the God of our salvation. *David* after his crying sinne of murther, prayes, *Restore unto mee the joy of thy salvation*, this hee had lost; but in the same *Psalme* hee prayes, *Deliver me from blood O God, thou God of my salvation*; therefore whatsoever *sense, reason, temptation, the law, or guilt upon conscience* shall say, Nay however God himselfe, by his
strange

Psal. 51.

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2 Cor. 1. 3.

Mic. 7. 18.

Deu. 26. 18.

Ps. 118. 18

strange carriage to us may seeme to be, yet let us cast our selves upon him, and not suffer this *plea* to be wrung from us, but shut our eyes to all, and look upon God *All-gracious* and *All-sufficient*, who is the *Father*, the begetter of *comfort*, the God the Creator of *consolation*, not onely of things that may *comfort*, but of the comfort it self conveied through these unto us. *Who is a God like unto our God, that passeth by the sinnes of the remnant of his people?* This should not be thought on without admiration, and indeed there is nothing so much deserves our wonderment as such mercy, of such a God, to such as we.

Since God hath *avouched us to be his peculiar people*, let us avouch *him*; and since he hath past his word for *us*, let us passe our words for him that we will be *his*, and stand for him, and to our power advance his cause. Thus *David* out of an enlarged spirit saith, *Thou art my God, and I will praise thee*, thou art *My God, and I will exalt thee*. Whatsoever wee engage for God, wee are sure to be gainers by. The true Christian is
the

the wisest Merchant, and makes the best adventure. Hee may stay long, but is sure of a safe and a rich returne. A godly man is most wise for himselfe. Wee enter on Religion upon these termes, to part with our selves, and all, when *God* shall call for it.

§. 2.

God much rejoyceth in sinners converted, as Monuments of his mercy; and because the remembrance of their former sins, whets them on to bee more earnest in his service, especially after they have felt the sense of *Gods* love, they even burne with a holy desire of honouring him, whom before they dishonoured, and stand not upon doing or suffering any thing for him, but cheerfully embrace all occasions of expressing obedience. *God* hath more worke from them, than from others; why then should any be discouraged?

Neither is it finnes after our conversion, that nullifie this claime of *God* to be *Ours*. For this is the grand difference

O o

rence

Ex ipso dolore suo compuncti, in amore Dei. Damna praecedentia luctu sequentibus compensant.
Greg.

Cap. 34.

Heb. 10.
22.

rence betwixt the *two Covenants*, that now God will be mercifull to our finnes, *If our hearts by faith be sprinkled with the blood of Christ*. Though *one sinne* was enough to bring condemnation, yet the free gift of grace in Christ, is of *many* offences unto justification. And we have a sure ground for this; for the *righteousnesse* of Christ, is Gods *righteousnesse*, and God will thus glorifie it, that it shall stand good to those that by faith apply it against their daily finnes, even till at once we cease both to *live*, and *sin*. For this very end was the *Son of God* willingly *made sin*, that wee might be freed frō the same. And if all our sins laid upon Christ could not take away Gods love from him, shall they take away Gods love from us, when by Christs blood our souls are purged from them?

O mercy of all mercies, that when we were once his, and gave away our selves for nothing, and so became neither his, nor our owne, that then hee would vouchsafe to become ours, and make us his by such a way, as all the Angels in heaven stand wondring at,
even

even his Sonnes not onely taking our nature and miserable condition; but our sinne upon him; that that being done away, wee might through Christ have boldnesse with God as *ours*, who is now in heaven, appearing there for us, untill he brings us home to himselfe, and presents us to his Father for *his* for ever.

Thinke not then onely that wee are Gods, and he *ours*, but from what love and by what glorious meanes this was brought to passe; What can possibly disable this claime, when God for this end hath founded a covenant of peace so strongly in Christ, that sinne it selfe cannot disanull it? Christ was *therefore manifest, that he might destroy this greatest worke of the devill* Forgivenesse of sins *now* is one chiefe part of our portion in God. It is good therefore not to pore and plod so much upon sinne and vilenesse by it, as to forget that mercy that rejoyceth over judgement. If wee once be Gods, though wee *drinke this deadly poyson, it shall not hurt us.* God will make a medicine, an antidote of it; and for all other evils, the fruit of them is

1 Ioh. 3.
5, 8.

Mar. 16. 18

Cap. 34.

by Gods sanctifying the same, the *ta-king away sinne* out of our natures; so that lesser evils are sent to take away the greater. If God could not over-rule evils to his owne ends, he would never suffer them.

§. 3.

Ier. 32.

I have stood the longer upon this, because it is the *one thing needfull*, the one thing we should desire, that this one *God*, in whom, and from whom is all good, should be ours. All promises of all good in the new covenant spring first from this, that *God will be ours, and we shall be his*. What can we have more? and what is in the world lesse that will content us long, or stand us in any stead, especially at that time when all must bee taken from us? Let us put up all our desires for all things wee stand in need of, in this right wee have to *God* in Christ, who hath brought *God* and us together; hee can deny us nothing, that hath not denyed us himselfe. If he be moved from hence to doe us good,
that

that wee are *his*, Let us bee moved to fetch all good from him, on the same right that hee is *ours*.

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The perswasion of this will free us from all pusillanimity, lowlineffe, and narrownesse of spirit, when wee shall thinke that nothing can hurt us, but it must breake through God first. If God *give quietnesse*, who shall *make trouble*? If God be with us, who can be against us? This is that which puts comfort into all other comforts, that maketh any burthen light: This is alwayes ready for all purposes: Our God is a present, and a seasonable helpe. All evils are at his command to be gone, and all comforts at his command to come. It is but, *goe comfort*, *goe peace* to such a mans heart, cheare him, raise him; *Goe salvation*, rescue such and such a soule in distresse: So said, and so done presently. Nay, with reverence be it spoken, so farre doth God passe over himselfe unto us, that he is content himselfe to be commanded by us. *Concerning the worke of my hands command you me*: lay the care and charge of that upon mee.

Iob 34.29

Isay 45.11

Cap. 34.

He is content to bee out-wrestled, and over-powred by a spirit of *faith*; as in *Jacob*, and *the woman of Canaan*, to be as it were, at our service. Hee would not have us want any thing wherein hee is able to helpe us. And what is there wherein God cannot help us? If Christians knew the power they have in heaven and earth, what were able to stand against them? What wonder is it if *faith* overcome the world, if it overcomes him that made the world? that *faith* should bee Almighty, that hath the Almighty himselfe ready to use all his power for the good of them to whom he hath given the power of himselfe unto? Having therefore such a *living fountaine* to draw from, such a *center* to rest in, having all in *one*, and that one *Ours*, why should wee knocke at any other doore? we may goe boldly to God now, as made *Ours*, being *bone of our bone*, and *flesh of our flesh*. Wee may goe more comfortably to God, than to any *Angell* or *Saint*. God in the second person hath vouchsafed to take *our nature* upon him, but not that of *Angels*.

Our

Tutius et
jucundius
loquor ad
vixum Je-
sum, quam
ad aliquem
Sanctorum
Dei, &c.
Quod ego
sum, fieri
dignatus est
Deus, non

Our God, and our Man, our God-man is ascended into the high court of heaven, to his, and our God, cloathed with our nature. Is there any more able and willing to plead our cause, or whom wee may trust businesse with, than he, who is in heaven for all things for us, *appertaining to God.*

It should therefore be the chiefe care of a Christian, upon knowledge of what hee stands in need of, to know where to supply all. It should raise up a holy shame and indignation in us, that there should be so much in God, who is so neare unto us in Christ, and wee make so little use of him. What good can any thing doe us, if we use it not? God is ours to use, and yet men will rather use shifts, and unhallowed pollicies, than be beholding to God, who thinkes himselfe never more honoured by us, than when we make use of him. If wee beleeeve any thing will doe us good, we naturally make out for the obtaining of it. If we beleeeve any thing will hurt us, wee study to decline it. And certaine it is, if wee beleeeved that so much good

Cap. 34.
fallens est
quod An-
geli. Ad cu-
ram Dei
sus, Descri,
processit
Deus tuus
homo tuus,
tunc tua
indutus illis
assidue pro
nobis inter-
pellat.
Aug.
Heb. 5. 1.

Cap. 34.

Iohn 17.3.

were n God, we would then apply our selves to him, and him to our selves ; whatsoever vertue is in any thing, it is conveyed by application and touching of it; that whereby we touch God, is our *faith*, which never toucheth him, but it drawes vertue from him ; upon the first touch of faith, spirituall life is begun. Its a bastard in *nature*, to beleeve any thing can worke upon another without spirituall or bodily touch. And it is a Monster in *Religion*, to beleeve any thing saving good will issue from God, if wee turne from him, and shut him out, and our hearts bee unwilling. Where unbeliefe is, it bindes up his power. Where *faith* is, there it is between the soule and God, (as betwixt the iron and the Loadstone) a present closing and drawing of one to the other. This is the beginning of *eternall life*, so to *know God the Father, and his Sonne Christ*, as thereby to imbrace him with the armes of *faith & love*, as *Ours*, by the best title he can make us, who is Truth it selfe.

Since then our happinesse lies (out of

of our selves) in God, we should goe out of our selves for it, and first get into Christ, and so unto God in him; and then labour by the Spirit of the Father and the Sonne, to maintaine acquaintance with both, that so God may bee *Ours*, not onely in *covenant*, but in *Communion*, hearkning what he will say to us, and opening our spirits, disclosing our wants, consulting and advising in all our distresses with him. By keeping this acquaintance with God, *peace, and all good is conveyed to us.*

Iob 22. 22

Thereafter as we maintain this communion further with him, wee out of love study to please him, by exact walking according to his commands; then wee shall seele encrease of peace as our care encreaseth, then he will *come and sup with us*, and be free in his refreshing of us. Then he *will shew* himselfe more and more to us, and *manifest still* a further degree of presence in joy and strength, untill communion in grace, ends in communion in glory.

But we must remember (as *David* doth here) to desire and delight in God *himselfe,*

Q. 34. *himselfe*, more than in any thing that is *Gods*; It was a signe of *S. Pauls* pure love to the *Corinthians*, when he said, *I seeke not yours, but you*. We should seek for no blessing of *God* so much as for himselfe.

What is there in the world of equall goodness to draw us away from our *God*? If to preserve the dearest thing we have in the world, we breake with *God*, *God* will take away the comfort wee look to have by it, and it will prove but a dead contentment, if not a torment to us. Whereas if we care to preserve communion with *God*, wee shall bee sure to finde in him whatsoever wee deny for him; *honor, riches, pleasures, friends, all*: so much the sweeter, by how much we have them more immediately from the spring head. We shall never finde *God* to be our *God* more, then when for making of him to bee so, wee suffer any thing for his sake. Wee enjoy never more of him than then.

* At the first we may seeke to him, as rich to supply our wants, as a *Physitian* to cure our soules and bodies; but here

we

wee must not rest till wee come to re-joyce in him as our friend, and from thence rise to an admiration of him for his owne excellencies, that being so high in himselfe, out of his goodnesse would stoop so low to us. And we should delight in the meditation of him, not onely as good to us, but as good in himselfe; because goodnesse of bounty springs from goodnesse of disposition; *He doth good because he is good.*

A naturall man delights more in Gods gifts, than in his grace. If he desires *grace*, it is to grace himselfe, not *as* grace, making him like unto God, and issuing from the first grace, the free favour of *God*; by which meanes men come to have the gifts of *God* without *God* himselfe. But alas, what are all other goods without the chiefe Good? they are but as flowers, which are *long* in planting, in cherishing and growing, but *short* in enjoying the sweetnesse of them. *David* here joyes in *God* himselfe, he cares for nothing in the world, but what he may have with his favour, and what ever else hee desires, hee desires

*Deus Dei
sine Deo.*

Cap. 34

fires onely that he may have the better ground from thence to praise his God.

p. 4.

The summe of all is this, *The state of Gods deare children in this world, is to be cast into variety of conditions*; wherein they consisting of nature, flesh, and spirit, every principle hath its owne and proper working. They are sensible as *flesh and blood*, they are sensible to discouragements as *sinfull flesh and blood*; but they recover themselves as having a higher principle (*Gods Spirit*) above flesh and blood in them.

In this conflicting state, every principle labouring to maintaine it selfe, at length by helpe of the Spirit, backing and strengthening his owne worke, *grace* gets the better, keeping nature within bounds, and suppressing corruption. And this the soule (so farre as it is spirituall) doth by gathering it selfe to it selfe, and by reasoning the case so farre, till it concludes and joynes upon this issue, that the onely way to attaine

taine sound peace, is (when all other meanes faile) to *trust in God*. And thereupon he layes a charge upon his soule so to doe, it being a course grounded upon the highest reason, even the unchangeable goodnesse of *God*, who out of the riches of his mercy, having chosen a people in this world, which should bee to the glory of his mercy, will give them matter of setting forth his *praise*, in shewing some token of *good* upon them, as being those on whom he had fixed his love, and to whom hee will appeare, not onely a *Saviour*, but *salvation* it selfe. *No-thing but salvation*; as the Sunne is nothing but light, so whatsoever proceeds from him to them, tends to further salvation. All his wayes towards them, lead to that; which wayes of his, though for a time they are secret, and not easily found out, yet at length *God* will be wonderfull in them, to the admiration of his enemies themselves, who shall be forced to say, *God* hath done great things for them; and all from this ground, that *God* is *our God*

Cap. 34.

in covenant. Which words are a stearne that rule and guide the whole text.

For why should we not be *disquieted*, when we are disquieted? Why should wee not be *cast downe* when wee are cast downe? Why should we *trust* in God as a Saviour? but that he is [*our God*,] making himselfe so to usin his choicest favours: doing that for us, which none else can doe, and which hee doth to none else that are not his in a gracious manner. This blessed interest and intercourse betwixt Gods Spirit and our spirits, is the hindege upon which all turns: without this, no comfort is comfortable; with this, no trouble can bee very troublesome.

Without this assurance there is little comfort in Soliloquies; unlesse, when we speak to our selves, we can speak to God as *ours*. For in desperate cases, our soule can say nothing to it selfe, to still it selfe, unlesse it be suggested by God; Discouragements will appeare greater to the soule than any comfort, unlesse God comes in as ours.

See therefore *Dauids art*, hee demands

Cap. 34.

mands of himselfe why he was so cast downe? The cause was apparent, because there were troubles *without*, and terrors *within*, and none to comfort. Well, grant this saith the Spirit of God in him, (as the worst must be granted) yet saith the Spirit, *Trust in God.*

Soliloquie.

So I have.

Why then, waite in trusting? *Light is sowne for the righteous*, it comes not up on the sudden, wee must not thinke to sow and reape both at once. If trouble bee lengthened, lengthen thy patience.

What good will come of this?

God will wait to doe thee that good, for which *thou shalt praise him*; hee will deale so graciously with thee, as he will deserve thy praise, hee will *shew thee his salvation*. And new favours will stirre thee up to sing new songs: every new recovery of our selves or friends, is as it were a new life, and ministers new matter of praise. And upon offering this *sacrifice of praise*, the heart is further enlarged to pray for fresh blessings. Wee are never fitter to pray, than after praise.

But

Cap 34.

But in the meane time I hang downe my head, whilest mine enemies carry themselves highly, and my friends stand aloofe.

God in his owne time (which is best for thee) will bee the *saluation of thy countenance*, he will compasse thee about with songs of deliverance, and make it appeare at last, that hee hath care of thee.

But why then doth God appeare as a stranger to me?

That thou shouldst follow after him with the stronger faith and prayer; hee withdrawes himselfe, that thou shouldst bee the more earnest in seeking after him. God speakes the sweetest comfort to the heart in the *wildernesse*. Happily thou art not yet low enough, nor purged enough. Thy affections are not thoroughly crucified to the world, and therefore it will not yet appeare that it is Gods good will to deliver thee. Wert thou a fit subject of mercy, God would bestow it on thee.

But what ground hast thou to build thy selfe so strongly upon God?

Hee hath offered, and made himselfe

to

to be [*My God,*] and so hath shewed himselfe in former times ; And I have made him *My God*, by yeelding him his Sovereignty in my heart: Besides the present evidence of his blessed Spirit, clearing the same, and many peculiar tokens of his love, which I daily doe enjoy ; though sometimes the beams of his favour are eclipsed. Those that are *Gods*, besides their interest and right in him, have oft a sense of the same even in this life, as a fore-taste of that which is to come. To the scale of *grace* stamped upon their hearts, God super-adds a fresh scale of *joy* and *comfort*, by the presence and witnesse of his *Spirit*. And shewes likewise some outward token for good upon them, whereby he makes it appeare, that *he hath set apart him that is godly for himselfe, as his owne.*

Psal. 43.

Thus we see that discussing of objections in the consistory of the soule, settles the soule at last: *Faith* at length silencing all risings to the contrary. All motion tends to rest, and ends in it ; God is the center and resting place of

P p

the

Cap. 34.

the soule, and here *David* takes up his rest, and so let us. Then whatsoever times come, wee are sure of a hiding place and Sanctuary.

F I N I S.

H A B. 3. 17.

Although the fig-tree shall not blossome, neither shall fruit be in the Vines, the labour of the Olive shall faile, and the fields shall yeeld no meat, &c. yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will ioy in the God of my salvation.

P S A L. 91. 1, 2.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall lodge under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortresse; My God, in him will I trust.

P S A L. 73. 26.

My strength and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

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